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ABSTRACT

In 1996, the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) Youth Strategy introduced summer career placement programs, science and technology camps, and cooperative education programs for First Nations and Inuit youth in Canada. This evaluation focuses on the initial year of implementation, and is based on 100 telephone interviews and community visits with First Nations stakeholders, and interviews and visits to DIAND headquarters and regional offices. Programs were administered by DIAND, First Nations and Inuit organizations, or a combination of those two approaches. First Nations and Inuit administration was the most effective due to expertise in youth programming, use of existing infrastructure, and less time and money spent on administration. Students were exposed to a wide range of sectors, where they acquired basic job skills and increased their self-esteem, knowledge of job markets, interest in studies, and desire to stay in school. The evaluation presents lessons learned and improvements suggested by First Nation and Inuit participants. Overall, the initial implementation was considered very successful, with 3,800 students participating in summer programs, 2,000 students attending science camps, and 900 students participating in cooperative education. Recommendations focus on encouraging and providing financial support for program management by First Nations and Inuit regional organizations, improving reporting, and measuring long-term impacts of the strategy. Appendices present a summary of findings, regional reviews and case studies, a statistical overview, and an evaluation framework. (TD)

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Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
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Interim Evaluation of the DIAND Youth Strategy

Project 96/26
November 1997

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Corporate Services
Departmental Audit and Evaluation Branch

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Interim Evaluation of the DIAND Youth Strategy

Project 96/26
November 1997

Table of Contents

Page

Acknowledgments

Executive Summary i

Section 1 - Introduction 1
- Purpose of the Report 1
- Purpose of the Evaluation 1
- Evaluation Scope and Issues 1
- Methodology 2
- Organization of the Report 3

Section 2 - Program Profile 4
- Background on the Strategy 4
- Profile of the Initial Strategy and the Recent Additions 6

Section 3 - Status of Initial Program Implementation 11
- Key Steps in Implementation 11
- Regional Delivery Models 14
- Results/Outputs Achieved 15

Section 4 - Effectiveness of Strategy Implementation 17
- Strategy's Objectives 17
- Communication 18
- Delivery Mechanisms 19
- General Indicators of Cost-Effectiveness 20
- Reporting and Accountability 23
- Partnerships 24
- Strengths and Weaknesses 25

Section 5 - Measuring Impacts 27
- Initial Short-Term Impacts 27
- Long-Term Impacts 32
- Performance Measurement Issues and Future Evaluation 32

Table of Contents (continued)

Page

Section 6 - Lessons Learned and Best Practices **39**
- Implementation of the Strategy 39
- Communication 39
- Program Effectiveness 40
- Community Support 42
- Expansion of Existing Programs 42
- artnerships 42
- Reporting 43

Section 7 - Suggested Improvements **44**
- DIAND 44
- First Nations 45
- Communication 45
- Resources 46
- Reporting and Evaluation 46

Section 8 - Conclusions and Recommendations **47**
- Implementation of the Strategy 47
- Delivery Models 48
- Ongoing Reporting 49
- Long-Term Performance Measurement 50

Annexes
- Summary of Regional Allocations for the Youth Strategy 1996-1997
- Action Plan
- Terms of Reference

Appendices
- Appendix 1 - Summary of Findings with First Nations Stakeholders
- Appendix 2 - Quebec Regional Review and Case Study
- Appendix 3 - Manitoba Regional Review and Case Study
- Appendix 4 - Case Study of Onion Lake First Nation
- Appendix 5 - Statistical Overview
- Appendix 6 - Evaluation Framework for the DIAND Youth Strategy

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PRA worked closely with Terry Hunt, who directed the project, and Paula Saunders, who provided support during the planning and data collection phases of the study. We also want to acknowledge and thank the Evaluation Advisory Committee that shared its expertise with the research team.

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We also thank the many organizations and communities that assisted us in completing the research.

In 1996-1997, DIAND became a partner in the federal government's national Youth Employment Strategy and received $10 million. The strategy has been renewed for 1997-1998 and 1998-1999 with two additional programs and funding of $25 million per year. This interim evaluation focuses on the initial year of implementation examining the effectiveness of the strategy and its short-term impacts.

Purpose of the Evaluation and Approach

DIAND has undertaken to submit to Treasury Board an interim evaluation of the strategy. The purpose of this evaluation is to examine the delivery of the strategy's programs, the effectiveness of the initial implementation, and short-term impacts. The evaluation is formative, with a central focus on lessons learned and potential improvements. A supplementary product of the report is an evaluation framework which sets out an accountability and performance framework to help DIAND, First Nations and Inuit assess long-term impacts.

In the spring of 1997, we conducted just under 100 telephone interviews with First Nations stakeholders and visited three communities (part of which included 3 focus groups with youth). We also visited DIAND headquarters and three regional offices (Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Quebec) to conduct interviews and to review file data. The team also interviewed DIAND regional youth coordinators.

Findings

Status of Program Implementation

In spite of the short time between the strategy's announcement and the end of the school year, First Nations successfully implemented the Summer Student Career Placement and Science and Technology Camps programs. First Nations schools began to develop their Cooperative Education Program in the fall of 1996, once school started. Just under half the First Nations schools we interviewed indicated that their programs began in September 1996 or January 1997. A third of the schools reported expanding an existing program while the remainder were in the planning stages.

Overall Effectiveness of the Strategy's Implementation

Strategy implementation varied across the regions, but 3 approaches emerged.

1 - DIAND administration of programs;
2 - First Nations and Inuit organizations administration of programs; and
3 - DIAND and First Nations and Inuit administration of programs.

Regions such as Manitoba and the Yukon are directly involved in reviewing proposals, allocating funding, and monitoring program reporting. In Saskatchewan and Quebec, First Nations organizations manage the strategy on behalf of communities. The remaining regions pursued a combination of the two approaches. First Nations and Inuit administration of the strategy was found to be the most effective for reasons such as expertise in youth programming and use of existing infrastructure to distribute and share information. A review of program reporting data found that regional First Nations organizations also spent less time on managing the strategy and distribute a higher percentage of funds directly to students. They also have a higher rate of reporting.

First Nations and Inuit at the local level are continually pursuing partnerships with government departments and the private sector. Overall, First Nations and Inuit, especially northern and isolated communities, rely on existing on-reserve organizations to provide youth with opportunities. First Nations and Inuit also contribute a substantial amount of additional funds to the strategy.

While respondents believe that the strategy has met its objectives, under-reporting does not allow the department to accurately reflect these successes. For example, in regions such as British Columbia and the Yukon, First Nation submissions were less than half complete. In some cases, reporting is also inconsistent and incomplete.

Reported Short-Term Impacts

Most respondents believe the strategy has had positive impacts. To date:

- 3,800 students participated in summer student programs;
- 2,000 students took part in science camps; and
- 900 students participated in cooperative education.

Students were placed in a range of sectors, such as health, education, construction, retail and economic development. Students acquired basic job skills (computers, administration, sales, communication) that they can use in all fields. In focus groups, youth also stated that they acquired preparation skills (interviewing, writing cover letters and developing resumes) that will prepare them to compete for future jobs.

- Elementary and high school students were exposed to science and technology camps ranging from experiences in traditional medicines to university computer labs.

- Students reported that the strategy's programs had a positive personal influence. They reported an increase in self-esteem, improved knowledge of the job market, an enhanced interest in their studies, and a desire to stay in school.

Identifying Indicators to Measure Long-Term Impacts

Since the evaluation focussed on the initial year of implementation, it is too early to measure long-term impacts. However, the evaluation did assess what information is currently being collected and how it can be used to measure long-term results and ongoing performance monitoring. At present, program evaluation forms are used to collect data on placements and participants, while First Nations and Inuit informally collect data on program activities.

A supplementary product of the study is an evaluation framework which sets out an accountability and performance regime to help DIAND and First Nations and Inuit assess long-term impacts. The framework identifies many indicators for decision-making and evaluation purposes.

Lesson Learned and Suggested Improvements

Based upon the experiences of First Nation, Inuit and departmental officials, the evaluation identifies a number of lessons learned in terms of implementation, communication, effectiveness, partnerships and community support, and reporting. Suggested improvements identified by First Nation and Inuit participants for their own program implementation include selective matching of students and employers, obtaining community support, integrating the strategy's programs into the communities' economic development plans, including Elders in the process, developing orientation sessions for local coordinators, and having dedicated coordinators for cooperative education programs.

Recommendations

Overall the initial implementation of the strategy was viewed to be very successful. First Nation and Inuit implementing organizations noted concerns over the level of resources being devoted to the administration of the strategy's programs. The recommendations of the evaluation are:

- it is recommended that increased activities and resources be devoted to capacity building among First Nations and Inuit and related organizations to support them in implementing the strategy.

- it is recommended that all DIAND regional offices continue their efforts to encourage First Nations and Inuit regional organizations to adopt the management of the strategy. To assist this, the department may need to consider providing a financial support to First Nation organizations to administer the strategy, as has been done in the Quebec Region.

- DIAND regional offices should ensure that annual First Nations and Inuit audit reports are tracking Youth Strategy expenditures.

- it is recommended that the timeliness and level of submissions of program evaluation forms be improved.

- the evaluation forms should be enhanced to include information on the type and number of employers participating in the strategy, the types of skills/positions undertaken, and the sources of additional funds contributed to the programs.

- the department should work with First Nations and Inuit and other departments involved in Aboriginal youth programming to promote consistency in the reporting requirements across federal departments.

- it is recommended that DIAND identify, in consultation with First Nations and Inuit, performance measurement indicators that will assist both partners to measure the long-term success of the strategy.

- for the long-term evaluation of the strategy, it is recommended that a partnership approach be undertaken by the department and First Nations and Inuit. This process should include Aboriginal youth and use the evaluation framework developed in the course of this current interim evaluation as a starting point.

Purpose of the Report

In March 1996, the Government of Canada announced that it would spend $315M over three years to help create employment opportunities through the Youth Employment strategy. Human Resources Development Canada is the lead federal department with partners such as Industry Canada, Environment Canada, Canadian Heritage, and the department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND). DIAND was a partner in the strategy for 1996-1997 and received $10M for programming. The strategy was renewed for an additional two years with funding totalling $25M per year.

A review after one year of operation presents an opportune time to review lessons learned to date and to identify mid-term corrections for future programming. This report summarizes the findings of the interim evaluation of the DIAND Youth Strategy.

Purpose of the Evaluation

DIAND has undertaken to submit to Treasury Board an interim evaluation of the strategy. The review examines the delivery of the programs, the effectiveness of the strategy's initial implementation, and short-term impacts. The central focus of the evaluation is on lessons learned and potential improvements. A supplementary product of the report is an evaluation framework which sets out an accountability and performance regime to help DIAND and First Nations assess long-term impacts.

Evaluation Scope and Issues

The evaluation focuses on the initial strategy and is limited in scope to the three programs originally targeted to First Nations and Inuit communities (See Figure 1). The evaluation does not deal with the two new programs added in the spring of 1997. However, profiles for each program are discussed in the evaluation framework attached to this report.

The terms of reference for the evaluation were approved by the Departmental Audit and Evaluation Committee on October 31, 1996 (See Annex A). The evaluation issues to be addressed are:

- what is the status of program implementation?
- how effective and efficient has the initial strategy implementation been?
- what have been the short-term impacts of the strategy?

- What are the lessons learned and best practices?
- What improvements can be made and what are the options for future programming?

What is covered in the interim evaluation?

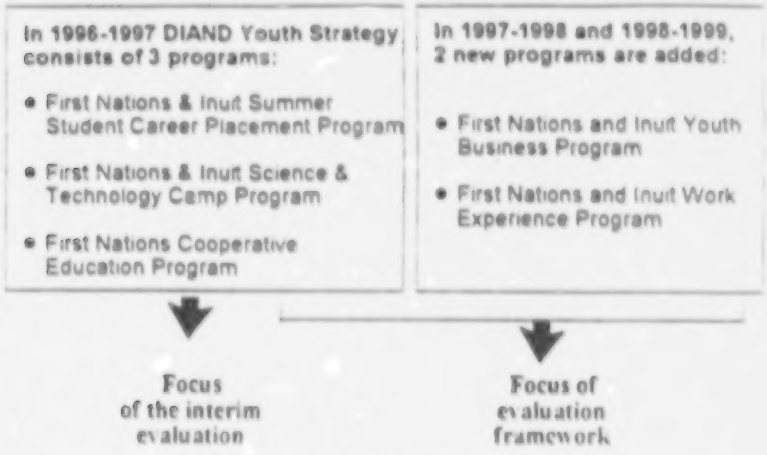

In 1996-1997 DIAND Youth Strategy consists of 3 programs:
• First Nations & Inuit Summer Student Career Placement Program
• First Nations & Inuit Science & Technology Camp Program
• First Nations Cooperative Education Program
In 1997-1998 and 1998-1999, 2 new programs are added:
• First Nations and Inuit Youth Business Program
• First Nations and Inuit Work Experience Program
Focus of the interim evaluation
Focus of evaluation framework

FIGURE 1

Methodology

Between February and May 1997, we used several methodologies to collect data, including:

- telephone interviews with 95 First Nations stakeholders. We obtained a 92% response rate for which a breakdown by category is illustrated in Figure 2;
- regional visits and a case study of a First Natioh community in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Quebec;
- as part of the case studies of communities, 3 focus groups with 21 First Nations students in Manitoba and Saskatchewan[1];
- in-person interviews with DIAND headquarters staff and telephone interviews with regional youth coordinators; and,
- file reviews at DIAND headquarters and the regional offices visited.

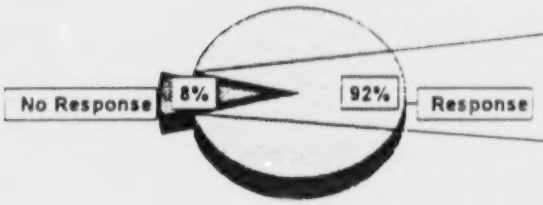
---

[1] We attempted to conduct additional focus groups in other regions but First Nations communities felt it was too early to measure program results and were reluctant to allowing their youth to participate in focus group discussions.

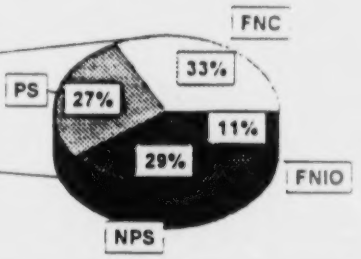
First Nations and Inuit Stakeholder Interviews

95 Interviews out of 103 Contacted

Response Rates



Breakdown of 95 Responses by category



Number of First Nations and Inuit Stakeholder Interviews

First Nations and Inuit coordinators (FNC)	31
Participating Schools (PS)	26
Non-Participating Schools (NPS)	28
FN Implementing Organizations (FNIO)	10

Organization of the Report

This report is divided into several sections

Section 1 - Introduction
Section 2 - Program Profile
Section 3 - Status of the Initial Program Implementation
Section 4 - Effectiveness of Strategy Implementation
Section 5 - Measuring Impacts
Section 6 - Lessons Learned/Best Practices
Section 7 - Suggested Improvements
Section 8 - Conclusions and Recommendations

We have appended to this study the terms of reference for the evaluation and separately bound reports with the findings of our data collection. These appendices include findings from the interviews with First Nations and Inuit stakeholders, case studies, a statistical overview, and an evaluation framework.

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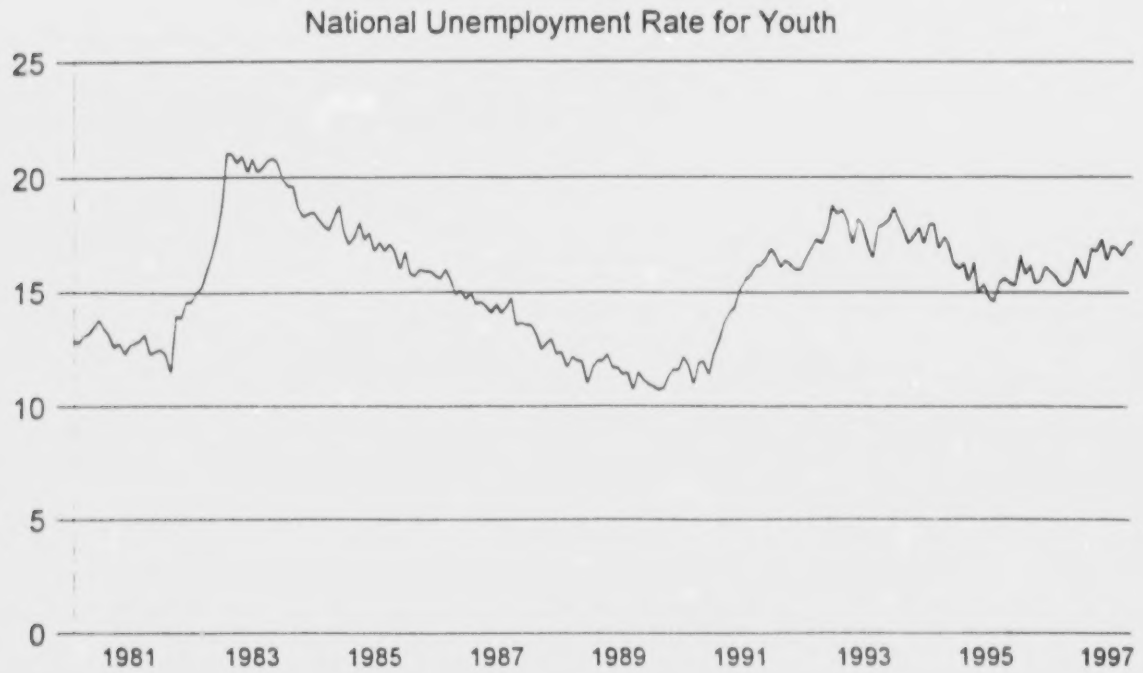
Background on the Strategy

Youth have a difficult time making the transition from school to employment. Figure 3 shows that the youth unemployment rate in Canada has risen over the last several years. In May 1997, the unemployment rate was 17.2% for youth between the ages of 15 to 24 years, almost double that of Canadians over the age of 24 years[2].



Although the most recent figures are not yet available, we know that the situation on-reserve is worse. Figure 4 shows the participation rate (percentage of total population in labour force) on-reserve is lower for registered Indians on and off-reserve between the ages of 15-24 years[3]. Figure 5 shows that the unemployment rate (percentage unemployed of total population) increases for all populations on-reserve. However, the rate is still highest for registered Indians; Census data from 1991 indicate that the unemployment rate for registered Indians on-reserve between the ages of 15 to 24 years was 43.7%.

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[2] Statistics Canada CANSIM data, On-line service, June 1997.

[3] 1991 Census Data, Aboriginal Peoples Survey, Table 1.3, Ages 15-24 years.

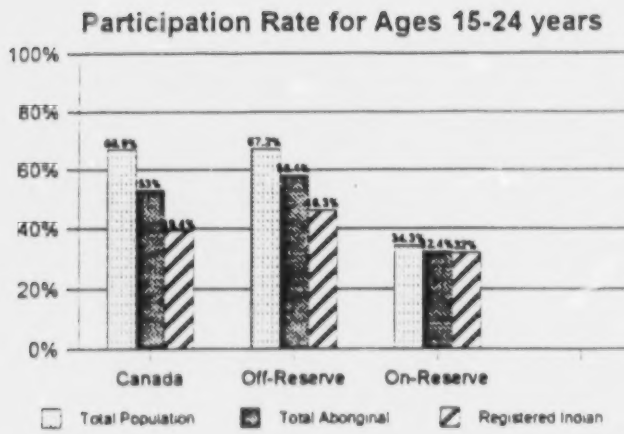

FIGURE 4

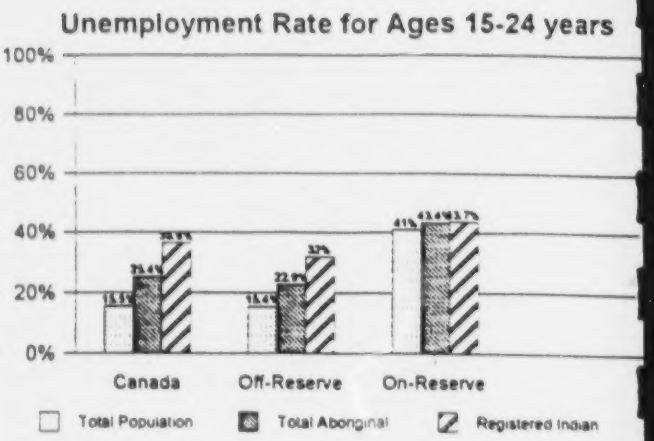

FIGURE 5

The Government identified the issue of youth unemployment in the February 1996 Throne Speech and appointed a Ministerial Task Force to review the problem. The Task Force found that the youth most at risk include those with minimal education and facing multiple barriers such as poor literacy, disabilities, single parenthood and residing in remote locations. Many Aboriginal and Inuit youth face all of these problems and others, such as high suicide rates. First Nations youth unemployment is among the highest in Canada. In addition, the First Nations and Inuit youth population, which represents a third of the total Aboriginal population[4], is increasing, thereby further pressing the urgency for Aboriginal and Inuit youth programming.

Consulting with Canadian youth and employers, the Task Force found the major barrier to success was the *"first job/experience conundrum"*. Another problem cited was inadequate information about the labour market and educational choices. The Government of Canada responded to these concerns by introducing the national Youth Employment Strategy which aims to provide youth with employment opportunities in partnership with the private sector and non-government agencies.

Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) is the lead department and its most popular youth programs, Youth Services Canada and Summer Career Placements, target urban Aboriginal groups and youth off-reserve. However, there were few programs specifically targeted to First Nations and Inuit youth. This prompted DIAND to become a partner in the strategy and introduce programs specifically targeted to these populations.

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[4] Departmental Audit and Evaluation Branch, DIAND, Statistical Overview (Draft), June 1997.

Profile of the Initial Strategy and the Recent Additions

This section provides an overview of the original strategy and the new programs added during 1997-1998.

Programs and Objectives

DIAND's Youth Strategy is targeted to First Nations on-reserve and Inuit youth at the elementary, secondary, and post-secondary levels. The objectives of the strategy are to:

- assist students in obtaining career related work experience;
- promote science and technology as a career opportunity; and
- establish or enhance existing cooperative education programs.

To this end, DIAND introduced three programs to meet these objectives:

- First Nations and Inuit Summer Student Career Placement Program
- First Nations and Inuit Science and Technology Camps[5]
- First Nations Schools Cooperative Education Program

Table 1 describes the programs, objectives, and guidelines. In the spring of 1997, the government renewed the strategy and introduced two additional programs which are described in Table 2:

- First Nations and Inuit Youth Business Program; and
- First Nations and Inuit Work Experience Program.

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[5] This program was originally called the First Nations and Inuit Science and Technology Summer Camps Program.

Table 1

Profile of Initial DIAND Youth Strategy Programs

Program	Description	Objectives	Target Group	Eligible Employer or Organization	Main Program Guidelines or Criteria
First Nations and Inuit Summer Student Career Placement Program	Provides career-related work experience and training to in-school First Nations and Inuit youth during the summer months on-reserve.	To assist students in obtaining work experience. To prepare students for future entry into the labour market. To create employment opportunities.	On-reserve full-time secondary and post-secondary students returning to school, of legal age to work.	Private and non-profit First Nations and Inuit organizations. Non-Aboriginal/Inuit business located in First Nations and Inuit communities.	• private businesses provide 50% of wages to a maximum of $2.50/hour • non-profit organizations may receive up to 100% of provincial adult minimum wage. • employers may receive a maximum of $100/participant and $3000/student in overhead costs for equipment for disabled students. • minimum 30 hours per week not exceeding 40 hours • between 6 to 16 consec ive weeks • must be gender balanced
First Nations and Inuit Science and Technology Camps	Provides first-hand experiences in various science and technology disciplines to on-reserve First Nations and Inuit youth.	To promote science and technology as a career choice.	On-reserve Aboriginal elementary and secondary students[6] and Inuit youth.	First Nations and Inuit governments, agencies and organizations.	• contribution towards tuition costs to attend existing science program or proposal to deliver one • camps to be science oriented • cost approximately $500 per student • proposals to be gender balanced
First Nations Schools Cooperative Education Program	Provides funding for proposals from First Nations education authorities to establish, maintain, or expand cooperative education programs for on-reserve First Nations and Inuit youth in band operated or federal schools.	To establish or enhance existing cooperative education programs. To combine school-based learning with workplace/community experience.	Students in grades 7- 13 attending on-reserve First Nations schools.	First Nations schools on-reserve, federal schools and Aboriginal schools administered under James Bay & Northern Quebec & Northeastern Quebec Agreement.	• schools on-reserve • work placement activities • career counselling and supervision activities • respect provincial cooperative programs and accreditation policies • an evaluation plan for students and program • community support and resource commitment

Table 2

Profile of Two New DIAND Youth Strategy Programs Introduced in 1997				
Program	**Description**	**Objectives**	**Target Group**	**Main Program Guidelines or Criteria**
First Nations and Inuit Youth Business Program	Lending institutions offer business advice, counselling, mentoring, advisory support and seed capital to explore or develop a business opportunity.	To enable lending institutions to offer Indian and Inuit youth, living on-reserve or in recognized communities, financial and mentoring support to start their own businesses.	Indian and Inuit youth ages 15 to 30 years. Out-of-school unemployed youth or underemployed attending part-time or about to leave school	• micro-lending (loans under $3,000) • small equity-matching conditionally repayable contributions • seed capital offered with mentoring and advisory support • program designed to complement Industry Canada's Aboriginal Business Canada Youth Initiative (where possible managed by same institution) • priority to proposals from Aboriginally owned lending institutions • operating costs for participating institution (e.g., loan loss reserve to offset risk, interest, marketing, counselling, etc.)
First Nations and Inuit Work Experience Program	Program funds proposals from First Nations and Inuit governments and organizations to provide supervised work experience for out-of-school and unemployed youth that will contribute to longer-term employability of the young person.	To provide mentored work opportunities for unemployed and out-of-school on-reserve First Nations and Inuit youth to increase their prospects for long-term employment.	First Nations and Inuit youth ages 16 to 24 years. Out-of-school and unemployed.	• pay minimum wage plus benefits • period of 6 to 9 months • proposals must include provision for a community-based project leader ensuring youth receives mentoring, develops life skills, work skills, counselling, career development • participants to develop an Individual Learning Plan • at least 4 participants working in teams, individual placements or a combination of the two • if participant completes full program may receive a "next steps" voucher (up to $2,000) to move to next phase of plan • maximum of $1,500 to make necessary adaptions for disabled youth participation • incremental costs for day care for working parents

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Roles, Responsibilities and Stakeholders

The theme of the strategy is to provide opportunities in partnership. Table 3 outlines the main roles of the strategy's stakeholder groups.

Table 3

DIAND Youth Strategy Stakeholders and Main Roles			
DIAND	**First Nations Implementing Organizations***	**First Nations**	**Employers**
Headquarters • policy and design • communicate information • develop criteria and guidelines **Regions** • allocate funding • review proposals • monitor and reporting	• regional communication • develop funding proposals • coordinate activities • develop and design programs • submit reports • allocate funding • review proposals • monitor and reporting	In addition to similar activities as FN Implementing Organizations: • develop partnerships with First Nations organizations/agencies • develop private sector on/off reserve partnerships • match students and employers • develop or seek out existing science camps • develop or enhance cooperative education program	• submit proposals • provide employment opportunities
First Nations and Inuit Implementing Organizations include education agencies, regional governments, Tribal Councils, Community Economic Development Organizations, etc. First Nations include schools, education authorities, economic development corporations, etc. (*) Note: There was a degree of difference in the extent to which these organizations undertook various implementation and administration activities.			

Program Funding

The 1996-1997 strategy allocated a total of $10M as follows[7]:

- $6,000,000 - Summer Student Career Placement Program;
- $800,000 - Science and Technology Summer Camp Program; and
- $3,200,000 - First Nations Schools Cooperative Education Program.

Funding is based on the number of eligible students in each region for the summer employment and science camp programs. For Cooperative Education, funding is based on the number of students in schools on-reserve.

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[7] DIAND headquarters data, February 1997.

A table with regional program funding allocations is found in annex.

A total of $25M annually for 1997-1998 and 1998-1999 is allocated to the renewed strategy[8]. Table 4 provides details about the allocation for each program.

Table 4

Annual Program Allocations for the Renewed DIAND Youth Strategy	
$8,200,000	First Nations and Inuit Summer Student Career Placement Program
$1,800,000	First Nations and Inuit Science and Technology Camps
$6,000,000	First Nations Schools Cooperative Education Program
$1,500,000	First Nations and Inuit Youth Business Program
$6,500,000	First Nations and Inuit Work Experience Program
$1,000,000	Housing Internship Program[9]

Reporting Requirements

There are two types of reporting for the strategy:

- **Program Reporting** - Information on outputs is submitted through the evaluation forms for each of the strategy's programs. These reporting requirements include the number of participants, their ages, grades and gender. The Cooperative Education Program started later in the fall of 1996 and the department requested interim progress reports be submitted by the spring of 1997.

- **Financial Audit** - At the end of each year, First Nations and Inuit submit an audit as part of the terms and conditions of their funding arrangement. The audit also contains information on how the strategy dollars have been spent.

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[8] Source: DIAND web site (www.inac.gc.ca), April 1997.

[9] The Housing Internship Program is managed by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. It includes Inuit youth through four projects in NWT with Arviat, Pond Inlet, Arctic Bay and Baker Lake Housing Associations.

Section 3 - Status of Initial Program Implementation

This section provides an overview of the process and results involved in the implementation of the DIAND Youth Strategy.

Key Steps in Implementation

Implementation of the strategy began in April 1996. Figure 6 identifies the key steps involved in implementing and delivering the strategy.

- The Summer Student Career Placement and Science and Technology Camp programs were implemented in the summer of 1996. In some regions, camps were also held in the fall and winter.

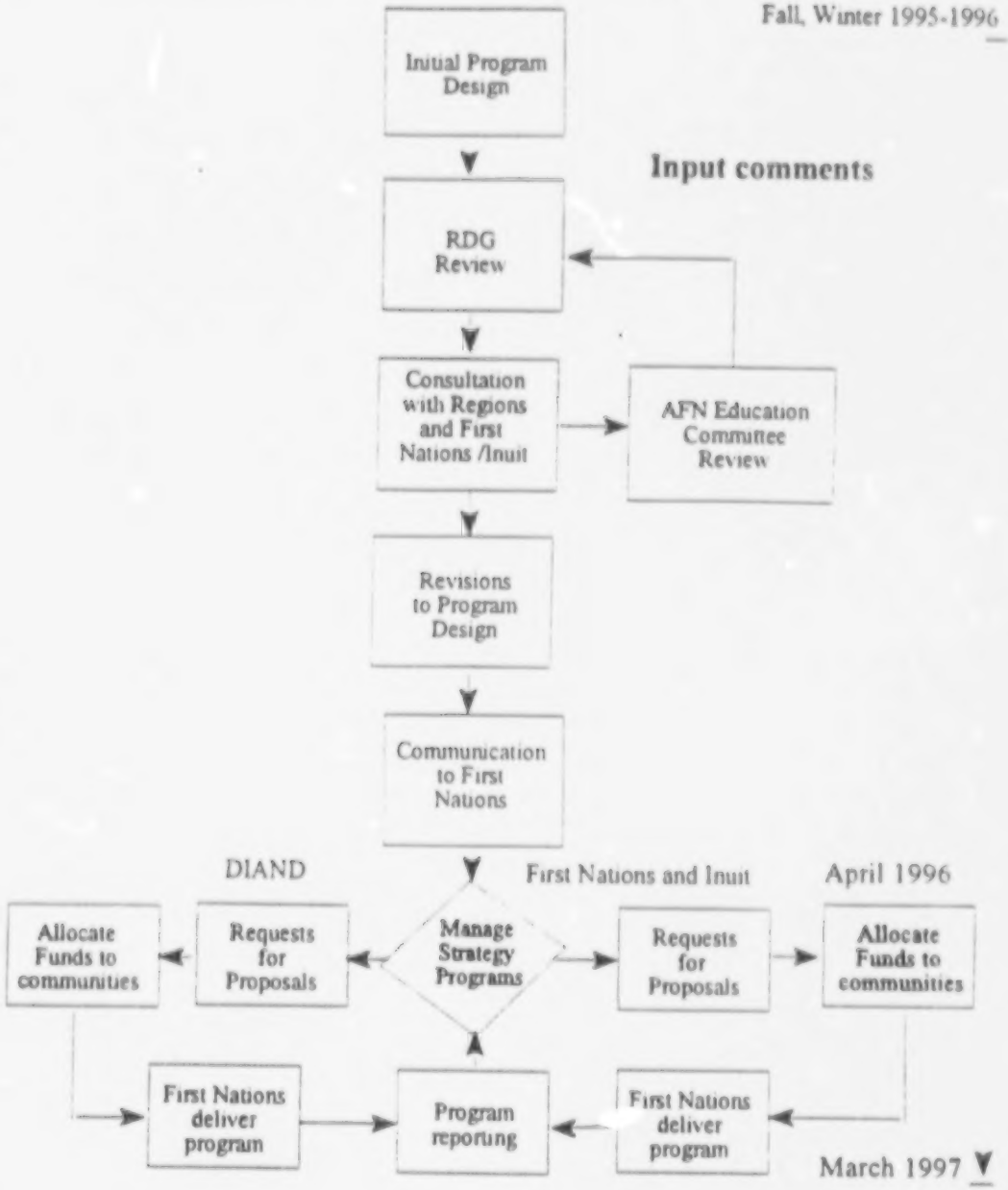
- The Cooperative Education Program was introduced later in the fall and winter. Our interviews with 25 participating First Nations schools indicated that 10 of the programs started in September or January 1997, 7 expanded an existing program, and the remainder were in the development and planning stages.

Communication

Regions sent letters and applications for proposals to First Nations councils and Inuit coordinators/organizations and Education Directors. Some regions distributed headquarters information packages to First Nations and Inuit organizations. In Quebec, Saskatchewan, and British Columbia, regional First Nations organizations developed information booklets, and held workshops or meetings to announce the programs.

Figure 6

The Implementation and Delivery Process



Guidelines

Interviews with DIAND regional staff, First Nations and their organizations indicate that overall, most regions followed the national guidelines. However, many communities adapted the guidelines to meet their needs. For example, the Summer Student Career Placement Program guidelines state summer employment should be between 6 and 16 weeks, but many communities had 4-week terms to allow more students to gain experience. Many communities could not implement science camps in the strategy's short time span and opted for fall camps. Headquarters later amended the guidelines to allow for year round camps.

Program Funding

Interviews and file reviews indicate that most regions flowed funds for the programs to districts or First Nations and Inuit based on the national formula. Manitoba, Alberta and British Columbia funded the Summer Student Career Placement Program using a per capita formula to ensure that all communities could hire at least one student at the secondary and post-secondary levels.

Some regions spent additional funds from their own budgets on the strategy. For example, the Quebec Region provided money to First Nations organizations to administer the strategy and Saskatchewan funded a post-secondary employment program that existed prior to the strategy.

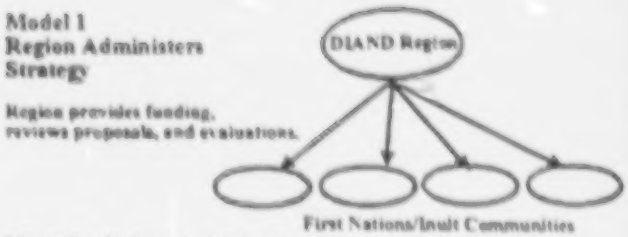
Regional Delivery Models

Through interviews and case studies, we identified 3 administrative models for implementing the Strategy illustrated in Figures 7 to 9.

Model 1: Region administers Strategy In the Yukon, Manitoba and Atlantic, the region reviews proposals, allocates funds, monitors evaluation forms, and reports on program outputs.

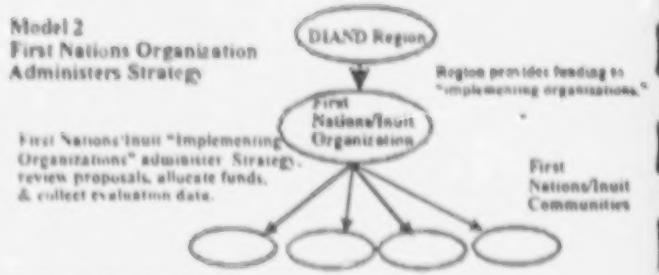
Model 2: First Nations organizations administer the Strategy In Quebec and Saskatchewan, First Nations organizations with a regional mandate in education allocate funds, review proposals, provide advice, and monitor reporting. Since the renewal, British Columbia now also fits into this model.

Model 3: A combination of regional & First Nations administration In British Columbia, Ontario, Alberta and the Northwest Territories, the region is responsible for one or more programs while others are administered by a First Nations or Inuit organization.



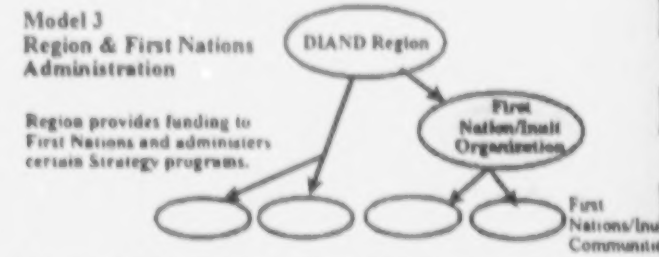
Manitoba, Yukon, and Atlantic

FIGURE 7


Model 2
First Nations Organization Administers Strategy
DIAND Region
Region provides funding to "implementing organizations."
First Nations/Inuit Organization
First Nations/Inuit "Implementing Organizations" administer Strategy, review proposals, allocate funds, & collect evaluation data.
First Nations/Inuit Communities

Quebec and Saskatchewan

FIGURE 8



British Columbia, Ontario, Alberta, and NWT

FIGURE 9

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Table 5 provides a brief overview of the approaches used in each region.

Table 5

Overview of Regional Approaches to Administer the strategy	
Region	**Description of Approach**
Atlantic	The region administers the strategy while education authorities and economic development corporations deliver programs.
Quebec	Five regional First Nations and Inuit organizations administer the strategy: the Conseil en Éducation des Premières Nations, Institut Culturel et Éducatif Montagnais, Cree Regional Authority, Administration Regionale Kativak, Bande Naskapi du Québec.
Ontario	The DIAND region and districts, Tribal Councils and other First Nations organizations administer various strategy programs.
Manitoba	The region administers the strategy.
Saskatchewan	The strategy is administered by one First Nations organization. The Saskatchewan Federation of Indian Nations manages all three programs.
Alberta	One treaty organization administers one program but was in the process of returning the program back to the region. The other two programs are administered by the region.
British Columbia	The First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) / First Nations Schools Association (FNSA) administered the Summer Student Career Placement and Science and Technology Camp programs. It is now responsible for the entire strategy.
Yukon	The region administers the strategy with field services officers who prepare proposals. There is no Cooperative Education Program.
Northwest Territories	The region administers a third of the budget while development corporations and Tribal Councils oversee two-thirds. There is no Cooperative Education Program.

Results/Outputs Achieved

As of June 1997, it was estimated that a total of approximately 4,700 students participated in the strategy[10]. Table 6, provides more information on program outputs.

- just under 3,800 students participated in the Summer Student Career Placement Program, the largest number coming from Ontario, Manitoba, and Alberta,
- over 2,000 students took part in the science camps, and

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[10] All regions had not yet reported; therefore, the information on program outputs is incomplete.

- it is estimated that to date almost 900 students participated in the Cooperative Education Program.

Table 6

National Highlights of Reported Program Outputs			
Program	**Number of Participants**	**Age of Students**	**Grade Level**
First Nations and Inuit Summer Student Career Placement	• 3768 students • 66% 4-8 weeks placements	• 61% ages 15- 19 years	• 71% high school students • 20% have some post-secondary/ university • 10% elementary school students
First Nations and Inuit Science and Technology Camps	• 2032 students • 56% students from MB, AB and BC	• 61% ages 12-13 years	• 36% less than grade 6
First Nations Schools Cooperative Education	• 879 students • 114 schools	• mainly students ages 15-19 years	• mostly high school students
Source: Departmental program reports, June 1997			

Table 7 identifies how many schools are participating in the Cooperative Education Program.

Table 7

Number of Reported First Nations Schools Participating in the Cooperative Education Program (n=114)						
Atlantic	**Quebec**	**Ontario**	**Manitoba**	**Saskatchewan**	**Alberta**	**British Columbia**
4	38	19	11	10	23	9
Source: Departmental program reports, June 1997						

Section 4 - Effectiveness of Strategy Implementation

The strategy was implemented over the past year; therefore, the evaluation discusses short- term program effectiveness. The following questions formed the basis of inquiry for the study and each will be discussed as it relates to the effectiveness of implementation, and to a lesser extent how efficient the strategy has been at achieving its objectives.

- Were the objectives of the strategy achieved?
- Did communication lead to awareness of the strategy's programs?
- Which approach led to the strategy being administered in a simplified, quick, and useful manner? Do regional differences have an effect on the implementation of the strategy?
- Was reporting timely and consistent?
- What partnerships have been developed?
- What are the strategy's strengths and weaknesses?

Baseline data examining the effect of the strategy over several years is needed to make long- term conclusions. Section 5 and the evaluation framework accompanying this report (Appendix 9) further discuss which data to collect and how to use it. However, at this time, we can identify factors that promote cost-effectiveness and efficiency, such as delivery models, communication tools, streamlined administration, and coordination at the local level.

Strategy's Objectives

Although the strategy has been in place for a year and actual impacts may not be observed for years to come, the majority of First Nations and Inuit respondents interviewed believe the strategy's objectives were largely met. We interviewed 54 First Nations stakeholders participating in the strategy, including First Nations coordinators, First Nations organizations implementing the strategy, and schools that participated in the Cooperative Education Program. Table 8 indicates that the majority of these respondents believe the strategy has met the objectives of instilling self-esteem in students and providing work experience. Many respondents believe that it is not yet possible to assess longer term objectives such as increasing graduation rates or helping with the transition from school to work.

Table 8

What impacts do you anticipate the strategy will have? (n=54)					
	Implementing Organizations n=10	First Nations Coordinators n=22	Participating Schools n=22	Total n=54	Percent %
Increase levels of self-esteem and confidence	10	20	14	44	81%
Provide career-related employment experience	9	19	12	40	74%
Expose youths to new and innovative technologies	10	8	13	31	57%
Help youths with the transition from school to work	9	9	13	31	57%

Case studies also indicate that to date many respondents believe the strategy's objectives are being met. For example, summer positions were created, cooperative education programs have been developed or expanded, science camps have been accessed or developed, and links with the community and employers established. Focus groups with students in Manitoba and Saskatchewan also indicate that many students believe the strategy programs encourage them to stay in school, build self-esteem and motivate them to continue their studies. Respondents from the case studies also acknowledge that it is too early to assess the impact on graduation rates and academic marks.

Communication

Most regions communicated information about the strategy by sending letters to Chief and Council, and Directors of Education. Of the interviews conducted randomly with First Nations and Inuit, over 65% of respondents participated and said they were aware of the strategy's summer employment program. Slightly fewer respondents were aware of the science camp program and only one-third said they were aware of the Cooperative Education Program.

We found that several eligible First Nations believed they did not have the resources to develop a cooperative program. Many respondents expressed an interest in communicating with First Nations who did have a program. While DIAND headquarters prepared a manual explaining how to set up a cooperative education program, regions did not widely distribute it to First Nations. Some regions stated the manual was too cumbersome. Most thought it appropriate for First Nations organizations to explain the program to communities.

Delivery Mechanisms

Most regions opted to transfer part or all of the strategy administration to First Nations and Inuit organizations. Those that did not, indicated they could not find an Aboriginal organization willing to take the responsibility on such a short time frame.

Regional personnel interviewed were concerned that the administration of the strategy placed an additional burden on them, especially with downsizing and extra responsibilities. Respondents stated that there is little time to review proposals and progress reports. They stated that they must devote more time to do this work than other programs of substantially greater cost. All respondents agreed that the most effective way to deliver the strategy was through one or more regional First Nations and Inuit organizations. For example, in Quebec, five First Nations organizations administer the strategy on behalf of the diverse communities in that large region. In Saskatchewan, the FSIN manages the strategy on behalf of all First Nations in the region.

Through case studies and interviews with First Nations and Inuit, we found that regionally based First Nations and Inuit organizations (Refer to Model 1) appear to be most effective for the following reasons:

- First Nations and Inuit organizations have expertise in youth programming.
- existing infrastructure, networks and contacts with First Nations and Inuit communities are used to communicate and distribute information, and to share experiences.
- organizations provide help and advice to develop proposals.
- First Nations and Inuit organizations are involved in other activities such as recruiting national employers, for example, banks, airlines or utility companies.
- First Nations and Inuit are more willing to report information to their own organizations because they feel a greater sense of ownership over programs.

Some First Nations and Inuit also have a mandate in education which allows them to provide expertise and advice in developing curriculum for a cooperative education program.

General Indicators of Cost-Effectiveness

As stated, regions where the strategy is administered by First Nations and Inuit organizations appear to be more effective in implementing and delivering the youth programs. Several indicators suggest this approach may also be the most cost-effective. The Statistical Overview identifies the following indicators:

- overall percentage spent on managing the strategy;
- leverage ratio (i.e., funding from other sources);
- percentage of First Nations reporting on programs; and
- the percentage of funds that went directly to youth.

These indicators focus on the Summer Student Career Placement Program for which data are most complete. Data are less complete for the Science and Technology Camps Program and as of yet unavailable for the Cooperative Education Program.

Table 9 provides a regional comparison of the above mentioned indicators for the Summer Student Career Placement Program. The Departmental Audit and Evaluation Branch utilized the data from the program evaluation forms submitted by First Nations and Inuit. The data were filtered to remove incomplete information and inconsistencies in reporting.

- The leverage ratio is the percentage of additional funds contributed to the strategy for every dollar DIAND provides First Nationsand Inuit.

- The reporting indicator is the percentage of reported expenditures versus the federal portion allocated by DIAND.

- The percentage spent on managing the program and the percentage directed to students are self-reported data from program evaluation forms submitted by First Nations and Inuit and their organizations.

Table 9

Data from Sample of First Nations and Related Organizations Summer Student Career Placement Program				
Region	Leverage Ratio (Other Contributions)	Self-reported data from evaluation forms		
		Percentage Spent Managing Program	Percentage Directly to Students	Reporting Indicator
Atlantic	0.49	11%	89%	100%
Quebec[11]	0.80	6.8%	93%	100%
Ontario	0.43	8.1%	86%	74%
Manitoba	0.22	9.6%	91%	93%
Saskatchewan	N/A	7.0%	93%	100%
Alberta	0.86	13%	86%	83%
British Columbia	0.33	8.4%	84%	20%
Yukon	0.19	5%	95%	51%
Northwest Territories	0.40	13%	82%	44%
Total	0.43	9.3%	89%	74%

Source: Departmental Audit and Evaluation Branch, Statistical Overview, June 1997.

Definitions

- Leverage Ratio: The rate comparing additional funds from other sources contributed by First Nations to funding provided by DIAND.
- Reporting Indicator: Reported total expenditures by First Nations and Inuit versus the federal portion allocated by DIAND.

- In Saskatchewan, and Quebec, where the regional administration of the strategy was fully transferred to First Nations organizations, program reporting for the summer programs was 100%. Other regions which did not fully transfer regional activities reported lower return rates on program reporting, such as British Columbia with 20% and the Northwest Territories with 44%. The lower rates mean that reporting is incomplete and program results are greatly under represented in some regions.

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[11] Figures do not take into account an additional $71,500 the Quebec Region provided to First Nations organizations to administer the strategy. This funding came from the region's own budget.

- The sample of First Nations and Inuit reported that 9.3% of total funds was spent on managing the program[12]. This compares favourably to other evaluations of economic development initiatives such as the Atlantic Canada Operating Agency (ACOA) and the Canada/Territorial Economic Development Agreements which found higher percentages spent on managing the program[13].

- The case studies indicate that First Nations organizations in Quebec and Saskatchewan have been effective in managing strategy programs. As seen in Table 9, Quebec[14] and Saskatchewan First Nations reported spending 6.8% and 7.0% of the funds to manage the program. These are among the lowest rates of expenditures on administration[15].

- Program reporting data indicate that 89% of the total funds spent went directly to First Nations and Inuit youth. This means that 11% was spent on other activities, such as management compared to the 9.3% that was reported by First Nations and Inuit as being spent on program administration. However, the statistical overview found that the difference is explained by under-reporting and because many First Nations and Inuit had a different understanding of the definition of "percentage spent on managing".

- The total leverage ratio for First Nations and Inuit is 0.43. This means that for every dollar allocated by DIAND to First Nations, they contribute just under half that amount in additional funding. In 1996-1997, First Nations and Inuit reported total expenditures of $6.3 million on the Summer Student Career Placement Program as follows:

  - $4.4 million from DIAND funds
  - $1.9 million contributed by First Nations and Inuit ($1.9 million represents 43% of DIAND's $4.4 million allocation or a leverage ratio of 0.43)

  This is an indication of First Nations and Inuit willingness to integrate the program into their communities' overall economic plans.

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12 At present we do not have information on how many First Nations did not report on the program.

13 Departmental Audit and Evaluation Branch, Statistical Overview, June 1997.

14 Our file review found that Quebec provided First Nations organizations an additional $71,500 to administer programs; therefore, its percentage spent on management is higher than reported.

15 The Yukon reported a rate of 5% of funds spent on managing the program. However, only half of the communities reported to date.

Complete and consistent reporting of these ongoing results measures will assist the department in the future to determine the outcomes of the five strategy programs. We discuss these ongoing results indicators and others in the evaluation framework that accompanies this evaluation study.

Reporting and Accountability

In terms of accountability, DIAND headquarters and regional staff were satisfied that the strategy was well managed and First Nations and Inuit were accountable for spending the program dollars for the purpose specified in the contribution agreement. However, a few respondents commented that this is not in the spirit of the new Financial Transfer Agreement and self-government. Managing the strategy in this way is not a problem in the short term, but several First Nations and Inuit stated that youth programs should become part of their mandate in education and that they should have freedom to allocate funds and design programs accordingly.

In terms of reporting, we identified two problems: under-reporting and the quality of reporting.

- **Under-reporting**: While headquarters respondents are satisfied that funding is spent appropriately at the local level, they are having difficulty obtaining roll up data from a few regions, resulting in under-reporting on program outputs on the Summer Student Career Placement and Science and Technology Summer Camp programs. In addition, the Statistical Overview found that regions and headquarters reported on $4,925,025 of the $6,000,000 set aside for the Summer Student Career Placement Program. Therefore, at present there is under-reporting of approximately $1,000,000. It will be the role of the financial audit submitted by each First Nation and Inuit organization as part of the terms and conditions of their funding agreement to determine how funds were expended.

- **Quality of reporting**: The quality of reports is also an issue identified in the Statistical Overview which found that First Nations and Inuit organization used different definitions for reporting items such as the amount spent on managing the Summer Student Career Placement Program. In addition, our initial file review found that reporting on the Cooperative Education Program has not been uniform, with some First Nations and Inuit completing the evaluation forms, and others submitting more detailed reports on their progress. In the latter case, over-reporting too can lead to inefficiencies.

Partnerships

The theme of the strategy is one of partnerships at various levels.

- **First Nations and DIAND**: This partnership consists of DIAND funding the strategy and providing some support and information at the regional and headquarters levels.

- **Private Sector:** Overall, most respondents stated that partnerships with private sector firms off-reserve are developing. In addition, First Nations organizations are taking an active role in recruiting large corporations such as banks and utility companies. Most of the partnerships with the private sector are on-reserve and range from the local gas bar to logging firms.

- **Other Government Departments and Levels of Government**: These partnerships consist of youth programs that provide summer employment or other job placement. First Nations and Inuit identified several federal departments involved in youth programming, including:

  - HRDC's Youth Services Canada, Summer Career Placement, Pathways to Success, and Native Internship programs;
  - Industry Canada's Student Connection and SchoolNet programs; and
  - Health Canada's Brighter Futures program.

  Provincial ministries did not play a large role but First Nations did identify placements with school boards, ministries of education, social services, and health.

- **First Nations Governments and Agencies:** First Nations and Inuit identified partnerships among regional First Nations organizations, education authorities, school boards, Tribal Councils, Chief and Council, and economic development corporations as the most important. There is a philosophy that youth are an integral part of the community's social and economic future. Therefore, youth programs are a priority incorporated into other community activities. Communities rely heavily on all employers on-reserve, from the health unit, band council office, or the local restaurant. First Nations and Inuit not participating in the strategy mentioned the use of other youth programs such as those for substance abuse and recreational programs.

Interviews with First Nations respondents and case studies indicate that partnerships developed at the community level will endure even without strategy funding. First Nations and Inuit have well established partnerships with other departments, such as Human Resources Development Canada. For example, First Nations have been involved in the Pathways to Success Aboriginal local area management boards for many years, and in some cases these structures have also taken on responsibility for HRDC's programs geared to Aboriginal urban youth. First Nations are in the process of developing relationships with the private sector off-reserve, so it is too early to assess the sustainability of these partnerships.

Strengths and Weaknesses

Table 10 identifies the most commonly mentioned strengths and weaknesses

Table 10

Strengths and Weaknesses of the Initial Strategy		
	Strengths	**Weaknesses**
Objectives	The strategy's objectives complement DIAND's and communities' priorities for enhancing economic development on-reserve and in Inuit communities. Therefore, the objectives are viewed as appropriate and relevant. The strategy provides valuable work experience that will benefit in-school youth with future work practices and their careers.	Some respondents state that larger communities with resources and many students will benefit more from the Cooperative Education Program, as opposed to small remote communities with no coordinators and limited placement opportunities Respondents state that there is a fundamental difference between post-secondary and high school cooperative education programs. Many believe expectations for the program are too high because secondary school placements may not lead to career choices.
Guidelines	Most First Nations and Inuit believe that the guidelines are flexible as they adapted them to their needs. However, other communities perceive them to be restrictive but often they do not attempt to adapt them to their needs.	Several First Nations and Inuit expressed concern with the fact that the Strategy did not provide funding to deal with issues such as the payment for Workers Compensation benefits which are required for students who work off-reserve. This is viewed as important for new partnerships with the private sector and expanding job opportunities available to students. The Summer Student Career Placement Program did not cover the additional costs of travelling long distances to take a job placement off-reserve. This is of particular concern to remote and northern communities that send students to other communities or urban centres for work experience.
Reporting	Most First Nations and Inuit, their organizations, and DIAND staff felt that the current level of reporting was adequate given the amount of money expended on the strategy.	There is under-reporting which results in an incomplete picture of program outputs and outcomes. Under-reporting is most prevalent in British Columbia, the Northwest Territories, and the Yukon. The quality of reporting varies among regions. There are some differences in the understanding of the definition of items reported on evaluation forms, such as the percentage spent on managing.

Strengths and Weaknesses of the Initial Strategy		
	Strengths	**Weaknesses**
Partnerships	Programs are based on local and regional partnerships between Directors of Education, education authorities, First Nations and Inuit governments, program coordinators, schools, business, the community and students. The strategy is a community and youth-driven initiative that provides exposure to new experiences and learning activities.	Several First Nations and Inuit respondents stated that often there are limited opportunities on-reserve and few chances to develop partnerships with private employers.
Communication	Overall, First Nations and Inuit were aware of the strategy and its programs.	Many First Nations reported that they wanted to have more information on the Cooperative Education Program, preferably in a forum where they could exchange ideas with schools that had successfully implemented the program.
Timing	DIAND and First Nations and Inuit organizations acted quickly to disseminate program funds once the strategy was announced late in the school year.	The timing of the strategy led to delays and frustration, especially with the Cooperative Education and Science and Technology Camp programs. In some cases, First Nations and Inuit were unable to submit proposals for science camps because they received the information too late. The renewed strategy was announced earlier in the school year.
Resources	The strategy funds have been increased from $10 million the first year to $25 million annually for the next two years. First Nations and Inuit are able to lever significant funds from other sources to contribute to the Summer Student Career Placement Program.	Several First Nations and Inuit communities commented that resources were limited. For example, for a First Nations to establish a cooperative education program requires workbooks and other tools but no money is available for these items. DIAND regional coordinators stated that there was minimal time and departmental resources available to administer the strategy in-house.

This section will discuss the short-term impacts of the strategy. It will take several years to observe long-term impacts. We offer suggestions for what to measure and how to collect data later in this section and in the evaluation framework accompanying this report.

Initial Short-Term Impacts

We used both qualitative (interviews, case studies, focus groups) and quantitative (statistical overview) approaches to assess short-term program results. Most of the data are based on respondents' perceptions of impacts to date.

Intended Impacts

The evaluation study found short-term results in several areas.

- **Creation of Career-Related Summer Employment**: The Statistical Overview found that 3,768 students participated in the Summer Student Career Placement Program. The majority of the students worked for 4 to 6 weeks during the summer. Interviews with First Nations and Inuit stakeholders indicate that there were a wide range of placements created. The following sectors were identified most often:

  - service industry (i.e., retail, restaurant, gas bars, etc.)
  - administration (i.e., band office, Tribal Council, etc.)
  - health, social services and education
  - construction and mechanical
  - recreation
  - economic development organizations

  Case studies and interviews also indicate that often communities hire students to coordinate other youth programs, such as the Summer Student Career Placement Program, and the Science and Technology Camps Program.

- **Acquisition of Job Skills**: In focus groups, youth who participated in the Summer Student Career Placement and Cooperative Education programs reported positive experiences. Table 11 lists some of their quotes. Students stated they acquired valuable skills to prepare them for future jobs, including:

  - skills to compete for and acquire a job, such as preparing resumes, cover letters and conducting interviews;
  - administration and computer skills; and
  - interpersonal and communication skills.

Table 11

Quotes from students who participated in focus groups
"I'm working with children in kindergarten and I enjoy it. It gives me confidence and I feel good about myself. I am now going to pursue a teaching degree."
"This placement introduced me to a job and work. It showed me how to work with the RCMP."
"The program showed me how to have a job and what to do. Our time in school taught me about job interviews, cover letters and resumes."
"We are taught real world skills."

- **Exposure to Science and Technology**: The Statistical Overview found that 2,032 students participated in the Science and Technology Camps. File review in three DIAND regions reveal that many communities opted to access computer camps at nearby universities or to develop camps that often focussed on traditional plants and medicines. Most of the participants were between 12 and 13 years old. Coordinators in the three case study communities believe that many students would otherwise not have been exposed to the sciences. Coordinators also believe the positive experience of the younger students will generate demand for a follow-up camp at the junior and high school levels.

  An organization in one of our case studies developed a mobile camp program that exposed science to communities throughout the province.

- **Development and Expansion of Existing Cooperative Program:** The Statistical Overview found that to date available information shows that 879 students and 114 schools participated in the Cooperative Education Program.

  We conducted interviews with 25 participating schools and found that 36% of the schools had started programs in the fall of 1996 or January 1997, and another 28% expanded existing programs. Other schools were in the planning and development stages.

  Interview findings with participating First Nations schools also indicate that the majority of respondents believe the quality of placement positions is either good or excellent. Interviews and case studies also identify two streams of cooperative education: one stream is geared to special needs students and focuses on life skills; the other stream is available to all regular high school students.

The three case studies reveal that the cooperative programs are diverse. One community used the program to help launch a micro-business venture while another sought placements in urban centres where their students will eventually pursue post-secondary studies.

- **The Development of Partnerships**: All stakeholder groups, including those that did not participate in the strategy, reported partnerships with other parties involved in Aboriginal youth programming. Table 12 identifies the partners most often mentioned.

Table 12

Table 12: Findings of Interviews with First Nations and Inuit Stakeholders Parties Reported to be Involved in Aboriginal Youth Programming (n=95)

	Participating FNs (n=26)	Non-Participating FNs (n=28)	FN Implementing Organizations (n=10)	FN Coordinators (n=31)	Total %
Local partnerships at First Nations level	13	7	0	23	45%
Human Resources Development Canada	3	7	7	18	37%
Provincial Ministries	3	4	3	17	28%
Health Canada	2	5	1	3	12%
Industry Canada	2	2	2	3	9%
Private Sector	N/A	N/A	2	2	4%
First Nations Interviewed that Participated in the Strategy's Programs (n=67)					
DIAND Programs					
Summer Placement	0	N/A	6	20	39%
Science & Technology Camps	0	N/A	9	9	27%
Cooperative Education	22	N/A	3	4	43%

Note: Respondents from Participating First Nations schools did not identify the private sector as a partner but they did refer to placements with private employers such as retailers. Non-participating schools did not identify private sector partners.

- **Positive Influence on Students:** Young people in focus groups in Manitoba and Saskatchewan stated that strategy programs had positively influenced them, in particular they mentioned:

  - an increase in self-esteem and confidence
  - encouragement to stay in school
  - enhanced interest in their studies
  - increased sense of responsibility
  - ability to better relate the school experience to employment
  - knowledge of the types of jobs that exist, especially in the community

  Cooperative Education coordinators in the case study communities also believe there are other benefits:

  - an increase in class attendance
  - some drop-outs are encouraged to return to school
  - teachers and coordinators are better able to engage in direct career planning with students
  - greater identification of students with professional career aspirations.

Respondents also made a number of observations about each of the strategy programs described in Table 13.

Table 13

Observations of Strategy Programs		
Science and Technology Camps	**Student Summer Placement Program**	**Cooperative Education Program**
Coordinators and students commented that the exposure to science and computers promoted these fields as a career option. Respondents also observed the following impacts: • First Nations and Inuit Aboriginal children were given a chance to be exposed to science and technology which in many cases would have not happened without the program, • the program allowed schools to develop educational partnerships with universities; • the creation of a fun learning environment for students (i.e., field trips, camp-outs, visits to museums, etc.), • students are encouraged to pursue science studies, • the promotion of team work through camp activities; and, • camps that focus on native medicines promote traditional learning.	Interviews and case studies identified the following impacts: • high school and post-secondary students gained work experience and earned money for school and other purposes; • students had opportunities to gain experience in a wide range of fields, including: administration, sales, business, maintenance, social services, computers, health care, education, economic development, research, band government, and police services, and, • students learned basic administration, computer, communication and inter-personal skills used in most jobs	In our focus groups, students were very positive about the program. They learned valuable skills such as preparing cover letters and resumes, and participating in interviews. Students felt they were treated as regular employees so they gained a "*real life experience*". They would recommend the program to others for the following reasons: • valuable work experience; • knowledge of community needs and jobs; • acquisition of new skills (i.e., computers, policing, banking, etc.); • preparation in finding jobs in the outside world (i.e., resumes, letters, interviews, competition process, etc.); • confidence and improved self-esteem; • better attitudes toward school; many students developed a "*stay-in-school*" attitude; and, • community appreciation (i.e., "a place to come back to after graduation"). Coordinators also stated that the summer and cooperative education work placements instilled life skills, such as budgeting for rent and transportation, or organizing work schedules. Many students also dealt with confidentiality issues such as taking an oath,

Unintended Impacts

Respondents noted a few unintended but positive impacts associated with the strategy.

- **Facilitate the transition from a rural to an urban setting**: Respondents from one case study community stated that the Summer Student Career Placement and Cooperative Education programs help students make the transition from a rural to an urban setting. Respondents stated that many students go away to university but fail because they cannot find jobs to help support them during school. The programs try to make the students better able to compete in an urban environment.

- **Creation of a micro-business**: One case study community created a micro-business (i.e., catering) using students. Cooperative education students with special needs are trained to work in the business. It is expected that the program will create full-time employment as the community is planning to hire the students after graduation.

Long-Term Impacts

It is too early to assess whether long-term impacts will be achieved. It will take years to know if there has been an increase in high school graduation rates, long-term employment opportunities, and the number of Aboriginal First Nations and Inuit youth choosing a career in science or technology. Most respondents believe that the strategy's goals are reasonable and impacts will eventually occur. However, many respondents recognize that it will be difficult to measure long-term impacts and to attribute results to the influence of the strategy.

Part of the evaluation study exercise was to develop an evaluation framework that identifies program activities, outputs, outcomes and short and long term impacts. It is the role of an evaluation framework to provide suggestions on how to assess long-term impacts. The framework also discusses performance measurement and collection strategies.

Performance Measurement Issues and Future Evaluation

This section summarizes the information needs identified by stakeholders and current performance measurement activities being undertaken. It also includes an examination of the short-term, ongoing data requirements currently being collected and ways in which this data can be strengthened. In addition, this section outlines potential long-term performance indicators and associated data collection approaches to the future evaluation which will involve a partnership approach between the department and First Nations and Inuit and related organizations.

Performance Information Utilization

The evaluation found that information needs vary by stakeholder group. The case studies undertaken as part of the evaluation found that at the local First Nation and Inuit level, information needs focus on day-to-day information which measures the operation of the strategy -- what is done, how it is done and what it costs. In addition to reports to DIAND which focus on key short-term outputs, outcomes and administrative efficiency, First Nations and Inuit particpating in the case studies also collect information on: the number and type of employers, skills acquired by the students; student and employer satisfaction; steps involved in the selection, recruitment and matching processes; job preparation activities; and resources devoted to the programs.

Figure 10 presents an overview of the information needs of the various strategy stakeholders. Generally, the evaluation found that performance information serves operational and strategic purposes by:

- Supporting First Nation and Inuit and departmental decision-making to improve activities such as program design, criteria, implementation mechanisms and accounting for performance;
- Ensuring that programs reflect the needs of students and employers;
- Ensuring that First Nations and DIAND resources are properly targeted to achieve best program outcomes; and
- Ensuring that the rationale for the programs are properly documented to support future resource allocations.

Figure 10: Overview of Information Needs by Stakeholder Group and Level

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The case studies undertaken as part of the evaluation underline the importance of performance information for First Nations and Inuit implementing the strategy. For example, one case study found that for the Cooperative Education Program, ongoing employer and student evaluations are used to monitor and adjust program implementation to ensure that students' needs are met. In this case, if a student is not acquiring the skills, the coordinator will meet with the employer and changes to the placement are made. If an employer does not keep students challenged, the program will not send others there. The coordinator reported that this had only happened once and that employers tend to be very cooperative.

Ongoing Data Collection Activities

Interviews with regional DIAND representatives found that the current ongoing reporting requirements meet their needs to account for funding and are felt to provide sufficient information about short term outcomes. The case studies undertaken as part of the evaluation found that the ongoing information collected by First Nations for their own management purposes exceeded the departmental information requirements.

The interim evaluation found a variety of measurement activities occurring at the local First Nation and Inuit level and regional implementing organizations. For example, First Nations and regional implementing organizations interviewed as part of the evaluation noted that they are collecting demographic information on participants in the strategy. Some organizations also gather information from students and employers about their experiences with the strategy. These organizations said they talk to the students and employers themselves, or they have the students fill out an evaluation of the program.

In addition, representatives of First Nation schools participating in the strategy's Cooperative Education Program noted that the program reporting requirements include: progress reports, interim reports, and a final report. The types of information collected on students include: interviews with students, employers and teachers; student diaries; pre and post placement evaluations; on-site visits, and; employer evaluations.

A review of the short-term information requirements needed to assess program outcomes was undertaken as part of the development of the evaluation framework prepared as part of this evaluation. While this review confirms that the short-term performance information requested by the department is sufficient for short-term accounting for funding, our study identifies a number of additional key information elements that should be collected to ensure that program objectives can be accurately assessed. For example, to ensure that the strategy's objective of promoting career related skills can be assessed, ongoing program reporting should be modified to include information on the type of jobs created. Table 13, below, provides an overview of the information currently being collected and the additional data elements which should be requested by the department. The evaluation framework (Appendix 6) provides more detail on current information requirements and the findings of this review.

Table 14: Examination of Ongoing Departmental Data Requirements	
Summary of Current Departmental Reporting Requirements	Areas Identified for Inclusion
✔ Outputs: Projects funded ✔ Outcomes: Jobs & placements created, duration of placements; age and grade of participants; average wages received by participants ✔ Administrative Efficiency & Partnerships: funds levered (i.e., contributions from other sources) and percentage of funds spent on managing programs	✔ Type of employer by category (i.e., band, federal, provincial, private) ✔ Type of placement by sector (i.e., administration, health, education, etc.) ✔ Better definition of information on other funding sources contributing to the program (i.e., band revenue, federal departments, etc.) ✔ National tracking of First Nations and Inuit participating in Science and Technology and Summer Student Career programs

Long-Term Information Requirements

Although the review of current reporting requirements found that the short-term information requirements are appropriate, the evaluation identified a lack of performance information to assess the long-term, intended impacts such as promoting increased graduation rates and facilitating the transition from school to work.

Most First Nation respondents stated that tracking students over the years would be an effective way to measure performance, especially in the Cooperative Education Program. However, interviewees noted that at this early stage it is not clear what type of information they should collect nor what DIAND's future needs will be. First Nations and Inuit respondent suggestions for indicators include: drop-out / graduation rates, absentee rates, careers selected, withdrawals from programs, and changes in students' academic marks, self-esteem, and the transition from school to work. All respondents of the regional implementing organizations stated that the best way to measure the impacts of the strategy is to ask students and employers to evaluate the strategy. However, First Nations respondents acknowledged that it would be difficult to assess whether or not program performance was due to the strategy. Those we interviewed cautioned that it would be difficult to attribute changes in the indicators to the strategy as they are also influenced by other factors such as social conditions and lack of employment opportunities.

Figure 11 presents a summary of potential performance indicators to assess long-term impacts and associated data collection methods. More detailed information is contained in the evaluation framework.

Suggested Approach to the Long-Term Evaluation

Although the interviews with the First Nations and Inuit Implementing Organizations and local coordinators found that currently they have no plans to undertake a long-term evaluation, they expressed a high level of interest in doing so. At present, their focus is on enhancing Strategy Programs but respondents were interested in measuring long term impacts and felt that a First Nation directed, regional approach is best suited to assess long-term impacts. Regional departmental officials were in agreement that First Nations and their regional implementing organizations should take the lead in evaluating long term impacts.

The evaluation identified the following *principles for collecting long-term performance indicators* and for undertaking the future evaluation:

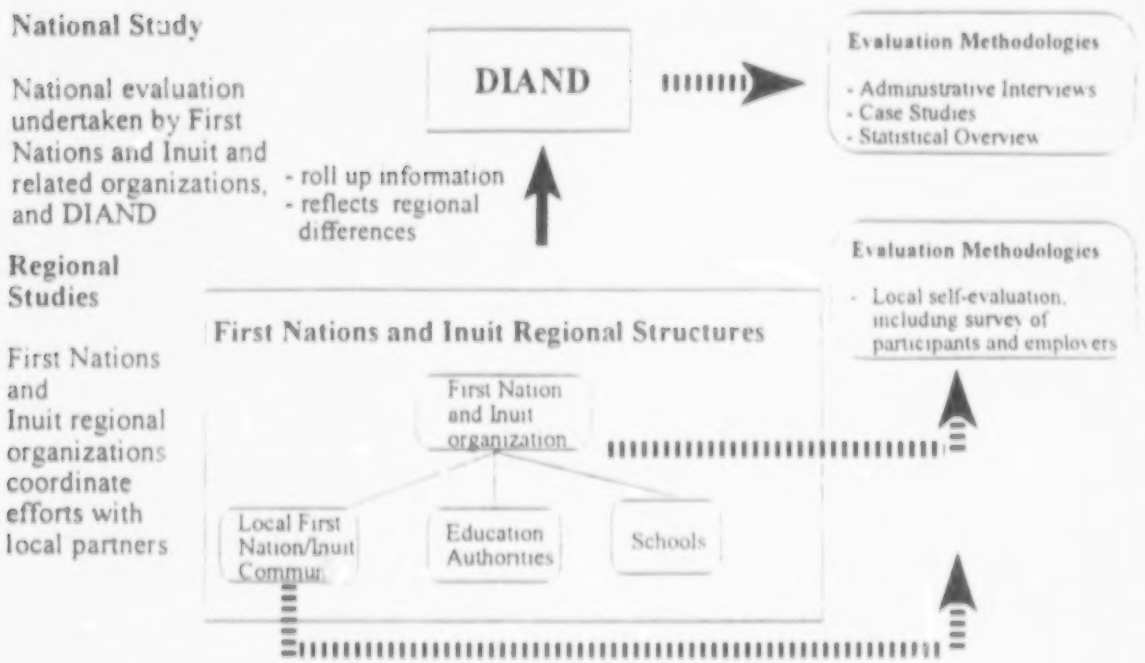
- First Nations and Inuit and DIAND need to work together to define their information needs;
- A performance framework should reflect local needs. First Nations and Inuit partners are managing programs and require information to ensure that programs reflect the needs of students and employers;
- Performance monitoring should be relevant to First Nations and Inuit and departmental local, regional and national information needs, as well as reflect those of central agencies, and
- The list of indicators should be concise, reflecting the size of the initial investment in programming and not be overly expensive or burdensome.

FIGURE 11: *KEY LONG-TERM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS & DATA SOURCES*

Selected Evaluation Issues	Key Indicators	Suggested Primary Data Sources
✔ **Strategy Relevance & Rationale**	Ongoing trend in program outputs (eg: change in jobs created, percentage of eligible youth participating, etc...) Local, regional & national Aboriginal youth long-term employment profile	✔ Ongoing program reporting ✔ Statistics Canada
✔ **Long-Term Impacts** ➢ Graduation rates ➢ Transition from school to work ➢ Youth employment ➢ Relevance of work to future employment	Graduation rates of participating & non-participating youth Rate of participants and non participants continuing their post-secondary education, finding employment Participant and non-participant long-term employment, income profile	✔ Local self-evaluations, including targeted local and regional surveys of participants & employers
✔ **Client Satisfaction**	Perceptions of youth, employers & First Nation and Inuit representives on self-esteem, skills match, satisfaction, etc...	✔ Long-term national evaluation

The evaluation framework (Appendix 6) identifies an approach for collecting the long-term performance information and for the conduct of the future evaluation. This approach involves First Nations and Inuit and DIAND working together on the development of evaluation tools to support the collection of information to track the long-term impacts of the strategy. Figure 12 presents an overview of this proposed approach which involves working with First Nations and Inuit to develop the necessary evaluation tools such as local self-evaluation guides and First Nations and related organizations involved in their implementation.

Figure 12: Proposed Approach for Future DIAND Youth Strategy Evaluations


National Study
National evaluation undertaken by First Nations and Inuit and related organizations, and DIAND
DIAND
Evaluation Methodologies
- Administrative Interviews
- Case Studies
- Statistical Overview
- roll up information
- reflects regional differences
Regional Studies
First Nations and Inuit regional organizations coordinate efforts with local partners
First Nations and Inuit Regional Structures
First Nation and Inuit organization
Local First Nation/Inuit Commun
Education Authorities
Schools
Evaluation Methodologies
- Local self-evaluation, including survey of participants and employers

There are many lessons learned and best practices to share with other communities described below.

Implementation of the Strategy

First Nations Organizations: In case studies, we observed that in regions where First Nations organizations administered programs, the strategy was implemented more quickly as existing networks and structures were used to communicate the objectives of the strategy and provide direction on how to set up a program. First Nations organizations were better able to address concerns on a regional level while in other regions individual communities had to deal with problems on their own.

Best Practice Example

One region provided additional funds to First Nations organizations to implement and administer the strategy. The region realized that initial, start-up resources were required for administrative assistance to transfer responsibilities in a short time frame.

Communication

Communicating Information in a Useful Way: First Nations and Inuit prefer using existing structures, such as education committees, conferences, workshops, or First Nations and Inuit organizations to learn about programs. While DIAND has provided information, such as the program guidelines and a manual on cooperative education, they are not the most effective as a communication tool. Many respondents noted that it is easier to learn from each other, especially from communities that have successfully implemented the strategy.

Best Practice Example

A First Nations organization in one region held a workshop with community representatives to explain the strategy, how to apply for programs, and how to set up programs. Regular follow-up teleconferences have been held to share experiences and to work out common problems.

Best Practice Example

One First Nation organization sends out a newsletter via facsimile with information on current activities in communities. The First Nation organization commented that other communities have contacted a featured community (in the newsletter) to request if their students might participate in a program or activity.

Program Effectiveness

Recruiting Students and Employers. First Nations and Inuit stakeholders report considerable success recruiting employers and students. Communities recruit students through advertisements in newspapers, notices in malls, newsletters, school assemblies, or other announcements. Respondents report that there is no shortage of students applying for the Summer Student Career Placement and Cooperative Education programs.

Coordination at the Local Level. We observed through interviews and case studies that in several communities, coordinators for the Summer Student Career Placement and Cooperative Education programs work closely together. The coordinators indicated that they share information, work together on committees, and share a common pool of employers. This interaction is believed to benefit students and many end up participating in both programs.

Best Practice Example

One First Nations organization encourages several First Nations to work together to share expertise. For example, three British Columbia communities are working together on the Summer Student Career Placement Program by sharing placements.

Summer Student Career Placement Program: First Nations and Inuit respondents reported providing a broad range of placements to students. The Statistical Overview also shows that most communities offer 4 to 8 week placements which respondents believe allow more students the opportunity to obtain a job placement.

Science and Technology Camps Program: The Statistical Overview indicates that science camps are geared toward students between 12 and 13 years of age which is different from the original guidelines which target students from 12 to 20 years. Some First Nations and Inuit respondents indicated that they had younger children participating in camps. Case study respondents believe that as interest grows, additional camps geared to older students will be needed.

Through case studies and a review of program progress reports, we observed that successful camps were those that made use of existing resources, such as university computer labs, or those that contained a traditional component.

Best Practice Example

One First Nation organization encourages communities to access, whenever possible, "ready-made" programs from universities or other agencies. This First Nation organization reports keeping an inventory of existing camp programs and resources around the province and refers First Nations to them. The organization also reports contacting resource-based agencies to develop a new camp or include activities in First Nations camps (e.g., visit to a hydro dam).

Best Practice Example

Many First Nations organizations have put a cap on spending for the camps and encourage communities to match the funds.

Best Practice Example

One First Nation organization developed a mobile science camp program that allows many communities across the province the opportunity to expose students to science. The program has developed a curriculum for First Nations students and also provides professional development and training opportunities for teachers in local schools.

Cooperative Education Program: In our case studies, we observed that successful cooperative education programs have a number of common features:

- a full-time coordinator to work with students and recruit employers,
- well developed curriculum and classroom work as well as job placements,
- manuals and other communication materials to explain program objectives to students, parents, teachers, and employers;
- on and off-reserve partnerships with the private sector and government agencies providing a wide range of jobs and potential career opportunities,
- extensive planning and preparation is put into developing the program,
- support in the community, usually a resolution from the Chief and Council or school board; and
- coordinators work closely with their counterparts administering the Summer Student Career Placement and Science and Technology Summer Camp programs to combine efforts.

In our case studies, we observed that if the above conditions are present, both streams of programming, one geared to regular students and the other to those with special needs, work well.

Best Practice Example

Because of the limited funding, one First Nation organization decided to focus the Cooperative Education Program on schools that can provide resources and employment opportunities for students. Only schools with at least 30 participants and established on and off-reserve partnerships were selected for the program.

Community Support

Political Support: First Nations respondents reported that the support of Chief and Council is an integral part of success. Often the Chief, Council, and education authorities are also actively involved in promoting their community and recruiting employers.

Best Practice Example

In one community, all political leaders and agencies are involved in promoting its programs and recruiting employers to participate in the Summer Student Career Placement and Cooperative Education programs. Chief and Council actively seek out partners from all sectors on and off-reserve that interact with this First Nation organization.

Community Involvement: First Nations respondents report that integrating the strategy's objectives into the community's economic plans and activities is also a factor in program success. Respondents also believe community support is important to help students address problems.

Best Practice Example

One regional First Nation organization noted a problem with "spring drop-off." Many adult students have family responsibilities and find it a challenge to stay in school or travel to a job placement. Program coordinators have made arrangements to help students with these obligations by having them work one day a week or to travel one week out of the month to gain their work experience. The First Nation organization commented that "drop-off" has been reduced.

Expansion of Existing Programs

Building on Existing Programs: In interviews, we found that several communities used program funds to expand existing youth programs, in particular summer employment and cooperative education programs.

Partnerships

On and Off-Reserve Partners: Both DIAND and First Nations and Inuit respondents stated that on and off-reserve partnerships are the key to providing a broad range of summer and cooperative job placements. Off-reserve placements expand upon opportunities available on-reserve.

Leveraging Funds: The Statistical Overview found that on average communities leverage 28% of total spending on the strategy. In one case study, we found a community where 85% of funds spent came from band revenues.

Access to Other Federal Programs: First Nations and Inuit interviews indicated that DIAND programs are only one source of youth programming for communities. We interviewed First Nations not participating in the strategy who also reported accessing HRDC programs such as the Summer Employment Development Program, the Native Internship Program, and Youth Service Canada.

Reporting

Incentives to Report: DIAND headquarters and regional staff reported some problems with obtaining reporting information. Some respondents believe incentives, whether positive or negative, may be needed to obtain reporting information.

Best Practice Example

One First Nation organization holds back 10% of program funds that are allocated to member communities when they submit their evaluation forms. We also found that the First Nation organization included information about the importance of reporting in its program information booklets sent out to members. Respondents reported that this method works well.

Best Practice Example

One DIAND region reported holding back 50% of program funds until First Nations submitted their evaluation forms. The region indicated that this has been found to work effectively.

Strategy stakeholders identified many suggestions for improvements to the strategy and its programs. Some are directed at the department while others are what First Nations and Inuit would like to improve at the local level.

DIAND

DIAND and First Nations and Inuit respondents made the following suggestions for how DIAND could improve the strategy.

- The original strategy did not deal with the many out-of-school and unemployed youth, especially those in remote communities. Respondents stated that there should be a program for out-of-school and unemployed youth. They suggested that the strategy should encourage students to create new business employment opportunities.

- DIAND should distribute information about programs as soon as possible. This will help First Nations who need more time to consult and develop programs.

- Regions would like to transfer activities such as regional coordination and administration of the strategy to First Nations regional organizations, but in some cases organizations are reluctant to take the responsibility. Some regional respondents stated that the strategy should include a separate amount for First Nations organizations to administer the program. Respondents suggested the funds could be a percentage of the overall strategy funds eliminating the need for separate accounting.

- DIAND regional staff's role should consist of ongoing contact with communities and progress reviews. Regional staff state that the focus should be on monitoring, not program administration.

- Regional respondents suggested shorter guidelines for each program to facilitate communication and allow First Nations flexibility. Since First Nations design their own programs, they believe a lengthy policy is not needed.

- Several First Nations respondents believe the guidelines of the summer camps should be changed to allow younger children to participate in the program.

- Regional respondents indicated that DIAND should help First Nations establish a forum to share best practices and other experiences. Respondents also suggested DIAND play a role in informing communities about other federal programs available to them, such as those offered by Industry Canada and HRDC.

First Nations

First Nations respondents identified several areas to improve programs.

- First Nations need to develop more jobs in students' career related fields of interest and should share placements among communities if necessary.

- The student selection and matching process needs to be improved to permit students to gain employment opportunities in their field of study. In some communities, placements are limited or are given out on a rotational basis so some students may not have the opportunity to pursue their preferred job.

- First Nations suggested their elders be included in the implementation and delivery process. Elders can teach about traditional ways and link the students to other initiatives in the community.

- Some respondents suggested including the development of an anti-racism strategy for the workplace into First Nations communities programs. Respondents believe this would build upon the observed improvement in Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal relations flowing from job placement involvement in some sites.

- It was suggested that a better orientation structure for local coordinators and teachers working with cooperative education was needed. Orientation activities should be similar to those prepared for coordinators who implement the program.

- First Nations respondents suggested a dedicated coordinator to recruit employers, assist students, and communicate with parents and the school is essential for the Cooperative Education Program. For larger communities, a full-time coordinator should be hired while smaller communities might pool their resources and use one person to administer the Summer Student Career Placement Program and the Cooperative Education Program.

Communication

Respondents suggested that First Nations models of cooperative education and science programs be discussed at a national meeting to facilitate sharing of ideas on alternatives for administering the programs. One suggestion was to have a conference with First Nations cooperative education coordinators from across Canada.

- Two communities volunteered to give presentations to other communities about their own programs in an effort to help them set up a new cooperative education program.

Resources

- Some First Nations respondents would like to see more resources and time allocated to cooperative education program orientation for teachers in schools
- Respondents suggested that the government provide additional funds to cover the extra cost of insurance for students in job placements off-reserve.
- First Nations organizations and coordinators at the local level want DIAND to increase resources, so that for the Summer Student Career Placement Program youth can be transported to jobs outside of the community.

Reporting and Evaluation

First Nations respondents noted the need for a formal long-term evaluation. They expressed an interest in wanting to be involved in evaluating their own programs and directing such a study.

Section 8 - Conclusions and Recommendations

This section presents conclusions and recommendations associated with the evaluation. Overall, the evaluation found that First Nations had positive experiences with the strategy and there is a strong view that short-term impacts have been achieved. In addition, many suggestions for improvements, such as establishing programs for out-of-school and unemployed youth, have been addressed by the addition of two new programs to the renewed strategy. Some First Nation officials, particularly representatives of the Implementing Organizations noted the need for increased resources to be devoted to the administration of the programs. In most cases, the adoption of the delivery of the strategy by these organizations is being done by utilizing existing human resources.

While the strategy is viewed by all stakeholders as a success, there are still some areas that need improvement and will assist in making the strategy more effective.

Implementation of the Strategy

Most First Nations interviewed indicated that they were aware of and participated in the Summer Student Career Placement and Science and Technology Summer Camp programs. However, interviews with eligible First Nations schools indicate that communities require more information about the Cooperative Education Program. Those interviewed tend to look toward Aboriginal forums and communication material to assist them in developing a program.

Recommendation 1:

> **It is recommended that increased activities and resources be devoted to capacity building among First Nations and Inuit and related organizations to support them in implementing the strategy.**

First Nations and DIAND both have a role in capacity building. Areas idenfitied by the evaluation include:

- information sharing, networking and communications

- First Nations respondents offered many suggestions revolving around the sharing of information and building capacity among local coordinators responsible for delivering strategy programs. Best practices include monthly conference calls of program coordinators, newsletters, and regional and national workshops. In terms of communication materials, a best practice includes short information booklets prepared by a First Nations organization to explain the strategy to its member communities.

- strengthening administrative and human resources

Departmental and First Nations representatives noted resource constraints in administering the strategy at the local level. An increased focus on ensuring adequate resources are available for administrative and capacity building activities would strengthen the long-term implementation of the strategy. Best practices included having financial resources and experienced coordinators to administer the strategy's program. Case studies show that coordinators, especially those responsible for the Cooperative Education Program, require strong administrative and program development skills to undertake activities such as recruiting employers and developing curriculum. Other best practices of sharing resources and expertise included smaller First Nations using one coordinator to administer all their youth programs, and hiring students from one program to help administer another strategy program. These activities should be encouraged across all regions.

Delivery Models

The evaluation examined the variety of delivery models currently being used across the country. Most respondents believe that a decentralized approach where First Nations organizations administer the strategy's programs on behalf of communities appears to be the most effective. Case studies indicate that First Nations organizations are able to respond more quickly to set up programs because they use existing structures to administer them. First Nation organizations also appreciate the opportunity to enhance capacity building efforts which were found to occur less in those regions where DIAND administers the strategy.

Recommendation 2

> **It is recommended that all DIAND regional offices continue their efforts to encourage First Nations and Inuit regional organizations to adopt the management of the strategy. To assist this, the department may need to consider providing a financial support to First Nation and Inuit organizations to administer the strategy, as has been done in the Quebec Region.**

The transfer of responsibilities reflects the general direction the department has taken with regards to local programming and reflects the staff complement in regional offices. While this approach will alleviate the administrative burden felt by DIAND regional coordinators, it may transfer this concern to First Nations organizations which in some cases are already reluctant to take on the administration of the strategy. The regions will need to engage in dialogue with First Nations to identify barriers or concerns associated with the management of programs and the associated administrative resources required. The department may need to consider providing a financial support to First Nation organizations to administer the strategy, as has been done in the Quebec Region.

The transfer will provide First Nations organizations with the opportunity to control the quality and direction of programs. The approach may also help create economies of scale by allowing First Nations to share resources, and by possibly lowering the overall amount First Nations in the region spend on managing the strategy, as has been done in Saskatchewan and Quebec. This approach may also allow for more exchange and sharing of ideas among First Nations communities.

DIAND regions will need to engage in dialogue with First Nations to identify the most appropriate model for them and to resolve any concerns about administering the strategy. DIAND and First Nations may also wish to consider other models being utilized by other departments. For example, Human Resources Development Canada, Industry Canada, and Foreign Affairs and International Trade have agreements with the Assembly of First Nations for the delivery of components of their youth programming. Consideration should be given to consulting these third parties to obtain lessons learned and best practices from these models.

Ongoing Reporting

While DIAND respondents are confident that program funding has been spent appropriately, current reporting does not provide information to reflect this situation. The Statistical Overview found that reporting among regions is not consistent. The amount expended and the number of placements created are under-reported and substantially understate program outputs and outcomes in some regions. The annual First Nation financial audit can be used to verify the amounts expended on the programs. A best practice to encourage timely and consistent program reporting is where regions and/or First Nations regional implementing organizations have held back a percentage of funds.

The evaluation forms which collect information on the ongoing program outputs and outcomes were generally found to be sufficient, however, the evaluation identified a number of enhancements to improve the quality of reporting. These include the addition of information on the type of employers recruited to assess employment sectors where the programs have been most effective, and the type of skills/positions created.

Recommendation 3

> **DIAND regional offices should ensure that annual First Nations and Inuit audit reports are tracking Youth Strategy expenditures. It is recommended that the timeliness and level of submissions of program evaluation forms be improved.**

Recommendation 4

The evaluation forms should be enhanced to include information on the type and number of employers participating in the strategy, the types of skills/positions undertaken and the sources of additional funds contributed to the programs.

Recommendation 5

The department should work with First Nations and Inuit and other departments involved in Aboriginal youth programming to promote consistency in the reporting requirements across federal departments.

Long-Term Performance Measurement

First Nations and DIAND utilize performance information to assist in the management and delivery of the program to ensure that the programs in the strategy are effective and that the needs of youths are being met. First Nations noted a strong interest in undertaking evaluations of their programs and tracking information to assess the long-term impacts of the strategy, but noted that they are unsure of the type of informaiton to collect. On its part, DIAND needs to collect information to account to Parliament on the outcomes of the funds it manages. This need will grow as funding for the strategy has doubled. At the same time, regions and First Nations are reluctant to engage in extensive data collection and want to ensure that the long-term tracking of the program is in keeping with the size of the initiative. Therefore, DIAND needs to work with First Nations to decide which indicators it wants to measure and what is the most cost-effective approach. The evaluation framework accompanying this report identifies potential long-term indicators, associated information requirements, and approaches for its collection.

A shared understanding of reporting is important as both DIAND and First Nations will use this information in decision-making. First Nations currently collect information on an informal basis but would benefit by consolidating efforts and formalizing the reporting process. This will allow First Nations the opportunity to share information with communities across Canada and to identify opportunities for program efficiencies and economies of scale.

Recommendation 6

It is recommended that DIAND identify, in consultation with First Nations and Inuit, performance measurement indicators that will assist both partners to measure the long- term success of the strategy.

Recommendation 7

For the long-term evaluation of the strategy, it is reccommended that a partnership approach be undertaken by the department and First Nations and Inuit. This process should include Aboriginal youth and use the evaluation framework developed in the course of this current interim evaluation as a starting point.

It is also suggested that DIAND continue to work with First Nations and implement any future evaluation in full partnership with them.

Summary of Regional Allocations for the Youth Strategy 1996-1997

Summary of Regional Allocations for the Youth Strategy 1996-1997			
Region	**Summer Student Career Placement Program**	**Science and Technology Camps Program**	**First Nations Schools Cooperative Education Program**
Atlantic	$359,900	$48,000	$96,000
Quebec	$646,640	$96,000	$544,000
Ontario	$1,294,460	$136,000	$512,000
Manitoba	$829,540	$120,000	$768,000
Saskatchewan	$710,360	$104,000	$608,000
Alberta	$702,100	$112,000	$416,000
British Columbia	$973,500	$96,000	$256,000
Yukon	$53,100	$8,000	-
Northwest Territories	$330,400	$80,000	-
Headquarters*	$100,000	-	-
Canada	$6,000,000	$800,000	$3,200,000

Source: DIAND headquarters data, February 1997
(*) Allocated to national First Nations organizations

Action Plan

ACTION PLAN

INTERIM EVALUATION OF FIRST NATIONS AND INUIT YOUTH EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY

Preamble: The development of this action plan, its implementation and all activities related to First Nations and Inuit youth employment programming will be achieved through a partnership between DIAND, AFN and ITC. A national working committee will be established comprised of three representatives from each partner.

(1) Recommendations	(2) Report Pg #	(3) Action Plan	(4) Resp. Manager & Title	(5) Planned Completion Date
Conclusions and Recommendations				
Implementation of the Strategy ***Conclusion*** Most First Nations interviewed indicated that they were aware of and participated in the Summer Student Career Placement and Science and Technology Summer Camp programs. However, interview with eligible First Nations schools indicate that communities require more information about the Co-operative Education Program. Those interviewed tend to look toward Aboriginal forums and communication material to assist them in developing the program. First Nations and DIAND both have a role in capacity building. Areas identified by the evaluation include information sharing, networking and communications, and, strengthening administrative and human resources. ***Recommendation:*** It is recommended that increased activities and resources be devoted to capacity building among First Nations and Inuit and related organizations to support them in implementing the Strategy.	47	The National Working Committee will coordinate research and the establishment of a database that will include information on the programs, curriculum material developed and success stories. The committee will identify means of sharing the information among communities e.g. webpage, newsletter. The Committee will also identify and recommend activities to support capacity building among First Nations and Inuit and related organizations.	National Working Committee/ LEHD	**January 1998:** Establishment of the National Working Committee **March 1999:** Completion of Database **1998 - 1999:** Identification of activities and resources

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(1) Recommendations	(2) Report Pg #	(3) Action Plan	(4) Resp. Manager & Title	(5) Planned Completion Date
Delivery Models ***Conclusion:*** The evaluation examined the variety of delivery models currently being used across the country. Most respondents believe that a decentralized approach where First Nations organizations administer the Strategy's programs on behalf of communities appears to be the most effective. Case studies indicate that First Nations organizations are able to respond more quickly to set up programs because they use existing structures to administer them. First Nations organizations also appreciate the opportunity to enhance capacity building efforts which were found to occur less in those regions where DIAND administers the Strategy. The transfer of responsibilities reflects the general direction the department has taken with regards to local programming and reflects the staff complement in regional offices. While this approach will alleviate the administrative burden felt by DIAND regional coordinators, it may transfer this concern to First Nations organizations which in some cases are already reluctant to take on the administration of the Strategy. The regions will need to engage in dialogue with First Nations to identify barriers or concerns associated with the management of programs and the associated administrative resources required. The transfer will provide First Nations organizations with the opportunity to control the quality and direction of programs. The approach may also help create economies of scale by allowing First Nations to share resources, and by possibly lowering the overall amount First Nations in the region spend on managing the Strategy, as has been done in Saskatchewan and Quebec. This approach may also allow for more exchange and sharing of ideas among First Nations communities. DIAND regions will need to engage in dialogue with First Nations to identify the most appropriate model for them and to resolve any concerns about administering the Strategy. DIAND and First Nations may also wish to consider other models being utilized by other departments. For example, HRDC, Industry Canada, and Foreign Affairs and International Trade have agreements with the AFN for the delivery of components of their youth programming. Consideration should be given to consulting these third parties to obtain lessons and best practices from these models. ***Recommendation:*** It is recommended that all DIAND regional offices continue their efforts to encourage First Nations and Inuit regional organizations to adopt the management of the Strategy. To assist this, the department may need to consider providing financial support to First Nations and Inuit organizations to administer the Strategy, as	48	LEHD will discuss the issue with regions to get a picture of the current situation Regions will meet with tribal/regional organizations to seek their adoption of the management of the strategy or to see possible alternatives such as co-management. Regions will also assess the need of providing additional funding. Regions will inform headquarters of the results of their discussions. LEHD will report to the National Working Committee	Robert A. Coulter Director, LEHD Regional Directors General	**April 1998:** National diagnostic of current situation **1998 - 1999:** Regions to discuss with First Nations and Inuit organizations and report to headquarters **1998 - 1999:** First Nations and Inuit to adopt the management of the strategy **1998 - 1999:** Status Reports provided to the National Working Committee

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Ongoing Reporting ***Conclusion:*** While DIAND respondents are confident that program funding has been spent appropriately, current reporting does not provide information to reflect this situation. The Statistical Overview found that reporting among regions is not consistent. The amount expended and the number of placements created are under-reported and substantially understate program outputs and outcomes in some regions. The annual First Nations financial audit can be used to verify the amounts expended on the programs. A best practice to encourage timely and consistent program reporting is where Regions and/or First Nations regional implementing organizations have held back a percentage of funds. The evaluation forms which collect information on the ongoing program outputs and outcomes were generally found to be sufficient; however, the evaluation identified a number of enhancements to improve the quality of reporting. These include the addition of information on the type of employers recruited to assess employment sectors where the programs have been most effective, and the type of skills/positions created. ***Recommendation:*** DIAND regional offices should ensure that annual First Nations and Inuit audit reports are tracking Youth Strategy expenditures. It is recommended that the timeliness and level of submissions of program evaluation forms be improved.	49	DIAND's regional funding services will endeavour to identify expenditures through band and Inuit organizations audits. LEHD will propose changes to reporting timeframes that will reduce the number of reporting requested.	RDGs	**July 1998:** Regions will report findings. **July 1999:** Regions will report findings. **April 1998:** Letter to all RDGs indicating changes in reporting timeframes.
Recommendation: The evaluation forms should be enhanced to include information on the type and number of employers participating in the Strategy, the types of skills /positions undertaken and the sources of additional funds contributed to the programs.	50	The National Working Committee will review all evaluation forms and make recommendations on changes required in order to improve reporting from communities and administering organizations.	National Working Committee	**March 1999**

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Recommendation: The department should work with First Nations and Inuit and other departments involved in Aboriginal Youth programming to promote consistency in the reporting requirements across federal departments.	50	The National Working Committee will compare the various federal departments reporting requirements to identify major differences. LEHD will facilitate an interdepartmental meeting with the National Working Committee to discuss the issue and seek possible harmonization.	National Working Committee Robert A. Coulter Director, LEHD	**March 1999**

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Long-Term Performance Measurement ***Conclusion:*** First Nations and DIAND utilize performance information to assist in the management and delivery of the program to ensure that the programs in the Strategy are effective and that the needs of youths are being met. First Nations noted a strong interest in undertaking evaluations of their programs and tracking information to assess the long-term impacts of the Strategy, but noted that they are unsure of the type of information to collect. On its part, DIAND needs to collect information to account to Parliament on the outcomes of the funds it manages. This need will grow as funding for the Strategy has doubled. At the same time, regions and First Nations are reluctant to engage in extensive data collection and want to ensure that the long-term tracking of the program is in keeping with the size of the initiative. Therefore, DIAND needs to work with First nations to decide which indicators it wants to measure and what is the most cost-effective approach. The evaluation framework accompanying this report identifies potential long-term indicators, associated information requirements, and approaches for its collection. A shared understanding of reporting is important as both DIAND and First Nations will use this information in decision-making. First nations currently collect information on an informal basis but would benefit by consolidating efforts and formalizing the reporting process. This will allow First nations the opportunity to share information with communities across Canada and to identify opportunities for program efficiencies and economies of scale. ***Recommendation:*** It is recommended that DIAND identify, in consultation with First Nation and Inuit, performance measurement indicators that will assist both partners to measure the long-term success of the Strategy.	50	The National Working Committee will work with the Audit and Evaluation Branch and the Program Data Directorate to identify performance measurement indicators, both quantitative and qualitative, which will reflect First Nations and Inuit specific outcomes. These indicators will be used for the long term evaluation of the Strategy. BEST COPY AVAILABLE	Robert A. Coulter Director, LEHD	May 1998

(1) Recommendations	(2) Report Pg #	(3) Action Plan	(4) Resp. Manager & Title	(5) Planned Completion Date
Recommendation: For the long-term evaluation of the Strategy, it is recommended that a partnership approach be undertaken by the department and First Nations and Inuit. This process should include Aboriginal youth and use the Evaluation Framework developed in the course of this current interim evaluation as a starting point.	50	The Departmental Audit and Evaluation Branch will involve the National Working Committee in the design and completion of the Long Term Evaluation, including: development of terms of reference, selection of the consultants; and the review and approval of the evaluation framework. The Committee will seek participation from regional First Nations and Inuit organizations. The AFN and ITC will select First Nations and Inuit youth to be involved in the design and completion of the evaluation.	Marie-France Dauray-Boult Director General Audit and Evaluation Branch Robert A. Coulter Director, LEHD AFN and ITC	August 1998 Fall 1998 Fall 1998

TERMS OF REFERENCE

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INTERIM EVALUATION OF THE DIAND YOUTH STRATEGY PROGRAM

BACKGROUND: The Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) initiated the Youth Strategy Program in April 1996. The overall objective of the Strategy is to provide First Nations and Inuit youth with career related opportunities to assist entry into the labour force.

The strategy consists of three distinct components: (a) the First Nations and Inuit Summer Student Career Placement Program; (b) the First Nations and Inuit Science and Technology Summer Camp Program; and, (c) the First Nations Schools Co-operative Education Program. The first two components began in the summer 1996 and the Co-operative Education Program commenced in September 1996.

The Summer Student Career Placement Program provides wage contributions to assist students in obtaining career related work experience. The Science and Technology Summer Camp Program aims to promote science and technology as career choices. The Co-operative Education Program aims to establish or enhance existing co-operative education programs in First Nations schools.

The initiation of the Youth Strategy Program became possible with the announcement in the March 1996 Budget, reallocating $315 million of budget savings ($105 million per year) to help create employment opportunities for young Canadians for the following three years. For the 1996-1997 fiscal year, $10 million has been allocated to the DIAND Youth Strategy initiative.

NEED: The department has committed to Treasury Board to undertake an interim evaluation of the initial implementation of the strategy.

SCOPE: The interim evaluation will assess the initial performance and short-term impacts of the strategy and its components.

ISSUES: The interim evaluation will address the following issues:

- What is the status of program implementation and what are the critical phases of the administrative delivery systems?
- How effective and efficient has the initial implementation of the strategy been?

- What have been the intended and unintended short-term impacts of the strategy?
- What are the best practices and lessons learned?
- What improvements can be made and what are the options for future programming?

APPROACH: The interim evaluation will be managed by a Senior Evaluation Manager from the Departmental Audit and Evaluation Branch (DAEB) in consultation with an evaluation advisory committee. This committee will consist of representatives of DIAND headquarters and two regional offices, the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) and a participating First Nation.

The interim evaluation will be undertaken by DAEB through the use of in-house and contracted resources. The primary evaluation methods will consist of interviews with a sample of participating students, First Nation co-ordinators, and employers. Reviews will be undertaken at two to three DIAND regional offices and at headquarters. On the basis of the planning documents and findings of the interim evaluation, a performance measurement framework will be produced to assess long-term impacts for future evaluation.

RESOURCES & TIMEFRAME: It is estimated that the evaluation will cost up to $60K. An initial draft of the evaluation is to be completed by March 1996.

APPROVED BY:

Jack Stagg
Assistant Deputy Minister
Policy and Strategic Direction

OCT 17 1996

Date